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Executive Orders

Obama Set to Announce Immigration Steps

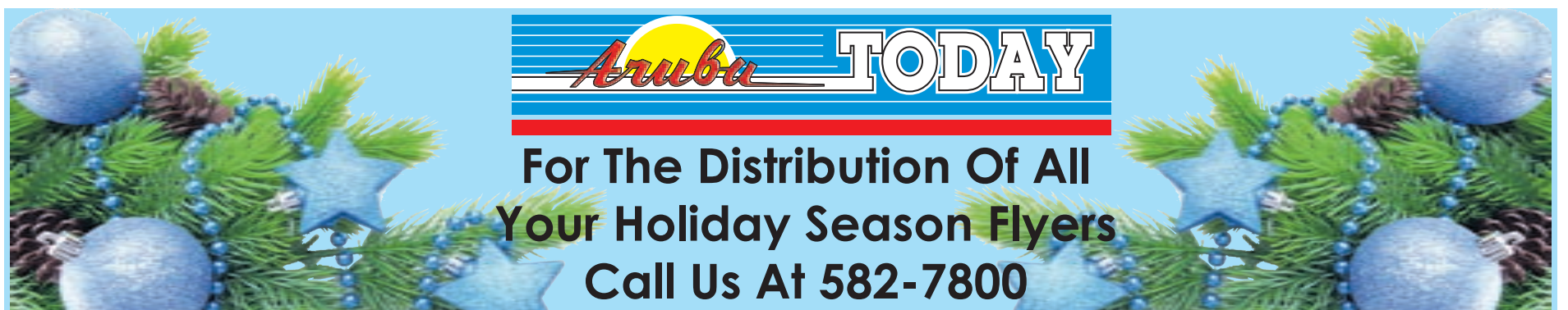
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President Barack Obama speaks in the East Room of the White House in Washington, Wednesday, Nov. 19, 2014. Obama said Wednesday he will sidestep Congress and unveil administrative actions on immigration, measures that could spare from deportation as many as 5 million people illegally in the U.S.

(AP Photo/Carolyn Kaster)



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Kerry in diplomatic overdrive on Iran

**MATTHEW
BRADLEY KLAPPER
Associated Press**

LONDON (AP) — With a deadline for Iranian nuclear deal fast approaching, U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry has embarked on a frenzy of high-stakes diplomacy in a last-minute push to secure an agreement — or at least prevent the process from collapsing. As senior negotiators huddled for a second day in Vienna in the latest round of talks, Kerry held separate meetings in London and was to

LEE

and met with Kerry on Tuesday. Their follow-up meeting, Wednesday however, was unannounced and confirmed only after an Associated Press reporter saw the foreign minister in Kerry's hotel.

Oman is not party to the negotiations among Iran, the U.S., Britain, China, France, Russia, the European Union and Germany. But unique among the Gulf Arab states for the close ties it maintains with Iran, it hosted high-level nuclear talks earlier this month and was the site of secret U.S.-

there won't be any winners," Wittig told reporters in Washington.

In Paris, Kerry will meet Saudi Foreign Minister Saud al-Faisal and French Foreign Minister Laurent Fabius.

Those meetings are key because French objections last year delayed the adoption of an interim agreement by several weeks, and Saudi Arabia remains deeply concerned about the potential for its arch-rival Iran to win concessions from the West.

In Washington, meanwhile, Obama administration of-



U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry, center, speaks on a phone as he arrives for a breakfast meeting with Britain's Foreign Secretary Philip Hammond, left, in London. Kerry has embarked on a frenzy of high-stakes diplomacy to secure an agreement on the Iranian nuclear deal.

(AP Photo/Matt Dunham, Pool)

travel to Paris on Thursday for further discussions before deciding whether or when to join the larger effort in the Austrian capital to forge a pact that would prevent the Islamic republic from reaching the capability to produce atomic weapons.

Despite his efforts, though, signs increasingly pointed to the prospect that Monday's deadline will be pass without a deal and the negotiations will be extended a second time.

In London, Kerry met Wednesday at his hotel with Foreign Minister Yusuf bin Alawi of Oman, which has emerged as a key bridge between Washington and Tehran, a senior U.S. official said. Bin Alawi was in Tehran last weekend

Iranian gatherings dating back to 2012.

Those earlier discussions laid the groundwork for an interim nuclear agreement reached a year ago, which the so-called P5+1 countries are now trying to cement with Iran in Vienna. Details of Kerry's meetings with bin Alawi were not immediately clear and U.S. officials were tight-lipped about any role Oman might play beyond that of an intermediary.

German Ambassador Peter Wittig wouldn't rule out an extension and said a nuclear deal could lead to better relations and partnerships with Iran and world powers in other regional issues, specifically Syria and Lebanon.

"If these negotiations fail,

officials, congressional aides and independent experts who've closely monitored the discussions said an extension of the talks was most likely. And, in a twist, many opponents of a deal now see prolonged negotiations as more preferable than an accord.

Even though many U.S. lawmakers opposed an extension when the last one was announced in June, aides in both parties said an agreement now would be viewed as a sign of the administration's desperation to secure a diplomatic breakthrough at any cost. Republicans in particular want more time so that they can attempt to pass new sanctions legislation that would pressure Iran into greater concessions. □



Palestinians inspect the demolished apartment of Abdel Rahman al-Shaludi in east Jerusalem on Wednesday, Nov. 19, 2014. Israeli authorities demolished the apartment as a punitive measure after al-Shaludi's deadly attack with his car on a Jerusalem train station last month which left five people dead.

(AP Photo/Mahmoud Illean)

Palestinian attacker's home demolished by Israel troops

PETER ENAV

Associated Press

JERUSALEM (AP) — The east Jerusalem home of a Palestinian who carried out a deadly attack last month was demolished Wednesday, hours after Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu promised strict security measures in the wake of a grisly synagogue assault. Tuesday's synagogue attack, which left five people dead, was the deadliest in Jerusalem since 2008 and came amid weeks of violence linked to the city's holiest site for Jews and Muslims.

The home destroyed in the Silwan neighborhood near the Old City belonged to Abdel Rahman al-Shaludi, who killed two people last month when he drove his car into a crowd at a light rail stop in Jerusalem.

Israeli troops blasted the interior of the third-floor apartment located in a four-story apartment building, leaving piles of cinderblocks and holes in the exterior walls. The blast caused minor damage to neighboring apartments and flattened a car parked below.

In recent weeks, Palestinian attackers using guns, knives and vehicles have killed 11 people — most in Jerusalem, but also in Tel Aviv and the West Bank. At least five Palestinians involved in the attacks were killed.

On Tuesday two Palestinian cousins wielding meat cleavers, knives and a

handgun stormed a synagogue in the west Jerusalem neighborhood of Har Nof, killing four worshippers and a policeman. The two assailants were shot to death by police.

Responding to Tuesday's attack, Netanyahu said he had ordered security forces to hit back hard at Palestinians involved in violence against Israelis and to resume the policy of home demolitions, a punitive tactic that has caused much controversy.

On Wednesday, he called the demolition "a significant and important step," and said there would be more. "We have nothing against the residents of east Jerusalem, but we will not tolerate attacks against our citizens," Netanyahu said, according to a statement from his office. "With a determined and firm hand we will restore security to Jerusalem."

Sitting amid the rubble of the demolished family home, al-Shaludi's grandmother said she was proud of him.

"No one should feel sorry for us, for our demolished home," she said, refusing to give her full name for fear of reprisals.

Worshippers returned Wednesday to the scene of the attack, the Kehilat Bnai Torah synagogue, seeking comfort in prayer. One of them, Gavriel Cohen, said the killings showed "that our future in this world is dependent on God." □

New US ambassador Tefft has a tough job in Moscow

LYNN BERRY

Associated Press

MOSCOW (AP) — Ask most Russians and they will tell you that the United States instigated the conflict in Ukraine with the ultimate aim of subjugating Russia. This is what they hear from President Vladimir Putin and in a steady stream of reports on state television.

Most in the West view it differently, of course. They condemn Russia for seizing the Crimean Peninsula from Ukraine, and accuse the Kremlin of arming the separatists whose battles with government troops in eastern Ukraine have claimed more than 4,000 lives. The U.S. and European Union have imposed punishing sanctions, but this has only made Russia more defiant.

With little common ground between these two narratives, tensions between Russia and the West are higher than at any time since the end of the Cold War. Diplomacy has stalled.

The arrival of new U.S. Ambassador John Tefft, a career diplomat with experience in Russia and Ukraine, offered some hope of improved lines of communication. But his reception Wednesday, when he presented his credentials to Putin, showed his job will not be easy. Putin gave a slight smile as Tefft strode toward him across a vast, gilded Kremlin hall. His words, though, contained both a welcome and a warning.

"We are ready for practical cooperation with our American partners in all fields on the principles of respect for each other's interests, equal partnership and non-interference in our domestic affairs," Putin said during the Kremlin ceremony.

Rossiya state television sent a sharper message. The news presenter described Tefft as a "specialist in color revolutions," a reference to the Rose Revolution in Georgia and the Orange Revolution in Ukraine that ushered in Western-leaning governments a decade ago. Tefft has been the U.S. ambassador in both countries, in addition to having served in Russia and in other State Department posts with responsibility for the region. "They call him a diplomat saboteur," the presenter said. The implication was that he was sent to Moscow to foment a popular uprising with the aim of overthrowing Putin. The Western sanctions, which target Russian businesses and individuals, including some members of Putin's inner circle, are seen as part of this effort. Tefft was one of 15 ambassadors to present their credentials Wednesday, but television reports unsurprisingly focused almost exclusively on him.

Russian television news broadcasts and talk shows seem obsessed with the United States. The state-owned channels churn out programs that portray the U.S. as the greatest threat to stability and security not only in Russia but throughout the world.

This message finds fertile ground with Russians still deeply bitter over the humiliation of the years following the 1991 Soviet collapse. The anti-Americanism also serves to rally Russians around Putin, a leader seen as strong enough to stand up to the West.

Tefft replaces Michael McFaul, the Stanford University professor who was the architect of President Barack Obama's effort to reset relations with Russia.

McFaul had the misfortune to arrive in Moscow in the middle of the mass anti-Putin protests of early 2012. A scholar who had long studied the development of democracy in Russia, he was an easy target for the Kremlin as it sought to portray the protests as a U.S. plot.

Tefft has been seen as more likely to be able to work with the Russians, who are accustomed to dealing with professional diplomats. This was the point he made Wednesday: □

Man charged in fatal subway attack

J. DAVID GOODMAN

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NEW YORK - A man was charged early Wednesday in the fatal shoving of a subway rider in the Bronx after he was taken into custody earlier in the day in a separate assault at a Manhattan subway station this month, the police said. The man, Kevin Darden, 34, was arrested on a murder charge in the death of

day, the victim of an earlier shoving episode, a 51-year-old man pushed to the platform of the West Fourth Street subway station on Nov. 6, told the police that he had been attacked by the same man who appeared in the video from Sunday.

"You shouldn't walk in front of me," the assailant told the man, according to the police, before shoving him

lice that the man they saw leaving the station was the same man in the video, who was seen boarding a bus two minutes later.

Until the man assaulted in the West Fourth Street attack, who is also Asian, identified Darden on Tuesday as his attacker, no probable cause had existed to arrest him. But shortly after tying him to the earlier crime, Darden



Kevin Darden, charged with the murder of a subway rider, at the 44th Precinct in the Bronx borough of New York, late on the night of Nov. 18, 2014. Darden was identified by the survivor of an earlier similar assault and appears to be seen on surveillance video shortly after Wai Kuen Kwok was shoved in front of an arriving train. (Edwin J. Torres/The New York Times)

the rider, Wai Kuen Kwok, 61, who was shoved into the path of an oncoming subway train just before 8:45 a.m. on Sunday. Darden was located in the Bronx near his last known address, the police said. He was believed to appear in surveillance video leaving the scene of the killing.

As the manhunt stretched into a third day on Tues-

day, the police said investigators believed Darden was the same person seen on surveillance video walking calmly from the 167th Street station minutes after Kwok was killed. Kwok had been standing on the platform with his wife.

Other riders on the platform did not see the attack, but they told the police that they saw Darden

to the ground. "I'm warning you."

was taken into custody on the street near his mother's home on Grand Avenue in the Bronx. He was unarmed and went with detectives without a struggle, the police said.

On Twitter, the chief of detectives, Robert K. Boyce, praised the work of detectives "on the arrest of Kevin Darden, individual wanted in connection with the homicide in transit." □

Major groups to stop protesting Davos

GENEVA (AP) — Two anti-corporate campaign groups said Wednesday that they will stop staging protests at the World Economic Forum because they believe the annual meeting of political and business leaders in Switzerland is no longer relevant.

Environmental group Greenpeace Switzerland and the Berne Declaration, which campaigns for responsible business, have organized protests in the Alpine town of Davos for the past 15 years. Since 2005, they have also pre-

sented the annual Public Eye Award, meant to shame companies that disregard human rights or the environment.

Instead, the groups said they would focus their work on promoting a plan — to be put to referendum in Switzerland — that would require Swiss-based companies to respect human rights and the environment. Switzerland is home to several major corporations that take advantage of its low business taxes.

Adrian Monck, a managing director at the World

Economic Forum, said he would miss the protests. But he added that dissident voices are now heard on the event's official panels, too.

"The Forum's research, its global reach, and its ability to nudge the world's leaders has made it more relevant and more relied upon than ever," Monck said in an online post.

The final Public Eye Award is to be presented Jan. 23. It will go to one of six companies for "lifetime achievements in corporate irresponsibility." □



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Upstate New York braces for another big snowstorm

CAROLYN THOMPSON
Associated Press

BUFFALO, New York (AP) —

Residents of the New York state city of Buffalo started digging out Wednesday from a massive snowstorm blamed for six deaths, even as another headed their way, threatening to break snowfall records.

Homeowners opened their front doors to find themselves sealed in by sheer walls of white. People were marooned at homes, on roads and at work. A woman gave birth in a firehouse after the snow prevented her from reaching the hospital.

Even for Buffalo, a city used to big blizzards blowing in from Lake Erie, this was an epic snowfall. The region found itself buried under up to 5.5 feet (1.68 meters) of snow Wednesday, with another storm expected to bring up to 3 more feet (1 meter) by late Thursday.

"This is an historic event. When all is said and done, this snowstorm will break all sorts of records," Gov. Andrew Cuomo said. The storm trapped more



Sue Radka helps shovel out a friends driveway on Wednesday, Nov. 19, 2014, in Lancaster, N.Y. Lake-effect snow pummeled areas around Buffalo for a second straight day, leaving residents stuck in their homes as officials tried to clear massive snow mounds with another storm looming.
(AP Photo/Mike Groll)

than 100 vehicles along a 132-mile (212-kilometer) stretch of the New York State Thruway, the state's main highway that remained closed Wednesday.

Trapped on a team bus for nearly 30 hours, the

Niagara University women's basketball team melted

snow for water, posed with long faces for pictures that were posted online and tried to keep each other's spirits up.

Bethany Hojnacki went into labor at the height of the storm and ended up giving birth in a Buffalo fire station after she and her husband couldn't get to the hospital. Baby Lucy weighed in at 6 pounds, 2 ounces (3.3 kilograms). Mother and child were later taken to the hospital in an ambulance.

Cuomo said Wednesday afternoon that all the trapped travelers had been removed from their cars. Asked by reporters how officials could allow people to be snowbound in cars for 24 hours, Cuomo cited a disabled trailer that prevented plows from removing fast-falling snow, and drivers' own wrongheaded choices to drive on a closed interstate highway.

Ferguson:

Gun sales surge ahead of jury's decision

ALAN SCHER ZAGIER
Associated Press

FERGUSON, Missouri (AP) —

Some suburban St. Louis gun dealers have been doing brisk business, particularly among first-time buyers, as fearful residents await a grand jury's decision on whether to indict the white police officer who fatally shot a black teenager.

Metro Shooting Supplies, in an area near the city's main airport, reports selling two to three times more weapons than usual in recent weeks — an average of 30 to 50 guns each day — while the grand jury prepares to conclude its three-month review of the case that sparked looting and

weeks of sometimes-violent protests in August.

"We're selling everything that's not nailed down," owner Steven King said. "Police aren't going to be able to protect every single individual. If you don't prepare yourself and get ready for the worst, you have no one to blame but yourself." The store's waiting list for private lessons and concealed-carry training classes extends into 2015. Protest leaders say they are preparing for non-violent demonstrations after the grand jury's decision is announced, but they also acknowledge the risk of more unrest if the panel decides not to issue criminal charges against Darren Wilson,

the white officer who shot Michael Brown, who was black and unarmed.

Other gun dealers say their sales spikes are comparable to the increases seen soon after Brown's death on Aug. 9.

First-time gun owners account for about 60 percent of his recent customers, King said.

The St. Louis County Police Department reports a sharp increase in the number of concealed-carry permits issued since Brown's death compared with a year ago. Police spokesman Brian Schellman said "it would be naive" to say the increase has not been driven by concern over the grand jury decision. □



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Obama set to announce immigration steps today

JIM KUHNHENN
ERICA WERNER
Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Barack Obama said Wednesday he will side-step Congress and unveil administrative actions on immigration, measures that could spare from deportation as many as 5 million people illegally in the U.S. and set up one the most pitched partisan confrontations of his presidency.

Republicans vehemently oppose the president's likely actions, but are deeply divided and have spent much of the week intensely debating how to respond. Some conservative members have threatened to pursue a government shut-down and one House lawmaker raised the specter of impeachment on Wednesday. Obama declared that Washington has allowed the immigration problem "to fester for too long."

The president will use a primetime address Thursday to announce his measures and will sign the executive actions during a rally in Las Vegas on Friday. In doing so, Obama will be taking an aggressive stand that he had once insisted was beyond his presidential power.

As many as 5 million people in the country illegally are likely to be protected from deportation and made eligible for work permits under the plan. They would not have a path to citizenship, however, and the actions could be reversed by a new president in two years. Officials said the

eligible immigrants would not be entitled to federal benefits — including health care tax credits — under Obama's plan.

The 5 million estimate includes extending deportation protections to parents and spouses of U.S. citizens and permanent residents who have been in the country for some years. The president also is likely to expand his 2-year-old program that protects young immigrants from deportation. The administration had considered extending the executive action to parents of young immigrants covered under a 2012 Obama directive but immigration advocates said they did not expect them to be included in the final plan.

Obama has said executive action is necessary because a wide-ranging immigration bill passed the Senate last year, but stalled in the Republican-led House.

Republicans have warned that unilateral action by Obama would only complicate prospects of Congress passing a comprehensive immigration bill. After sweeping midterm elections this month, the Republicans will control both the Senate and the House when the new Congress takes over in January. Laying the groundwork for his actions, Obama invited 18 Democratic members of the House and Senate — but no Republicans — to dinner at the White House Wednesday.

House Speaker John Boeh-



Rep. Luis Guterrez, D-Ill., accompanied by United Farmer Workers President Arturo Rodriguez, speaks during a rally in front of the White House in Washington, Wednesday, Nov. 19, 2014, to urge President Barack Obama to move forward on executive action on immigration.

(AP Photo/Evan Vucci)

ner's spokesman criticized Obama's planned announcement, noting that the president himself has said in the past that he is not "emperor" and is limited in his ability to act on his own.

"If 'Emperor Obama' ig-

nore the American people and announces an amnesty plan that he himself has said over and over again exceeds his constitutional authority, he will cement his legacy of lawlessness and ruin the chances for congressional action on this

issue - and many others," the spokesman, Michael Steel, said. Senate Democratic leaders on Wednesday took turns declaring their support for Obama's unilateral action, blaming Republican inaction for forcing Obama to act. □

Man arrested near White House with gun in his car

ALICIA A. CALDWELL
Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Secret Service arrested a man Wednesday after finding a hunting rifle, dozens of rounds of ammunition and a knife in the trunk of his car parked near the White House.

R.J. Kapheim, 41, was arrested on a charge of having an unregistered firearm,

which is illegal in the U.S. capital city.

Kapheim was arrested after he approached uniformed officers and explained that someone in the state of Iowa told him to drive to the White House. He later showed them to his car parked nearby and let officers search the vehicle. It was unclear if Kapheim had a lawyer. □

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American Living:

The Thrill of the Hunt for Discount Prices

SALLY W. HERSHIPS

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The Internet can tell us how long it takes to walk the length of the Great Wall of China (10 months), how many girlfriends George Clooney has had (lots) and even how many snowflakes fall in a year (about a septillion). But consumers still can't quickly and easily compare prices for a leather purse (big enough to tote a laptop, please)

about everything in the consumer space," said Kelly Goldsmith, an assistant professor of marketing at the Kellogg School of Management at Northwestern University. "In reality, when we know everything about everything, it is exhausting," she said.

Especially if consumers investigate options on their own - from new to used, vendors local to national, warranty or no. Too much

And while she admitted that shopping through a price aggregator site for a new pair of pumps, as she might for airline tickets, would be better from a practical standpoint, it would mean an end to her love affair with retail. "You come across something with a little red price tag on it in a bin of God knows what. You feel like it's destiny."

Then there is the retailer's

marketing at the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania. "If the sale wasn't there, well, maybe they wouldn't go to the store that day," she said.

For discount chains, slashing prices is crucial and nearly constant. But for midrange retailers, the Lord & Taylors and Banana Republics of the shopping world, sales are meant to be special. Competing solely on price can lead to a downward spiral of ever-deeper discounts.

"I don't think they want to get into this game that you can't win," Kahn said. "They'd rather compete on providing value to the customer."

Even if retailers agreed that transparent pricing should be more widely available, comparing prices for multitudes of products would take a special kind of brain - one that loves spreadsheets or navigating phone trees run by the Internal Revenue Service.

"There are a limited number of products where consumers have boiled down their understanding to such a limited set of factors that they can be confident truly shopping on price," said Robert Haslehurst, the managing director of retail practice for L.E.K., a global management consulting firm.

Take the humble T-shirt and its endless varieties. "The T-shirt from Wal-Mart and the T-shirt from the Gap aren't the same T-shirt, and you need to be superexpert at the construction of T-shirts, and the shipping of T-shirts in order to determine if one retailer was making extra margin off of you," said Joshua Pollack, an associate partner with the Parker Avery Group, a retail price consulting firm. Even if you do manage to sharpen your focus - to, say, a black, short-sleeve

V-neck in a polyester blend - you will wonder why it costs what it does.

Raw materials are also only one part of the equation, Haslehurst said. "There was the artist who designed it. There was the retailer you bought it from and the person who put it in front of you," he said. "There's value in more than just the item. There's value in the distribution."

And then there is the variable that retailers rely on, that different shoppers are willing to pay different prices for the same product. Take the ever-changing price of a plane ticket. "One would think that I would pay the exact same price wherever I go," Pollack said. "But because of this price discrimination capability you actually may not." When the airline industry first began setting prices based on when customers bought tickets or how many seats were still left, customers were furious, Pollack said. And they still are. "But despite the fact that customers hate the practice, it was so profitable for the travel industry, they just had to bear it out," he said.

It is unlikely, Pollack said, that consumers will see complete transparency of prices, mostly because comparing products is not always as easy as Apple iPhone to Apple iPhone.

Tell that to Vivian Harrow, 46, a human resources director for a global beauty company, and odds are she won't mind. Harrow said she enjoyed browsing and scanning, but not online and not with an app. "It's no fun to go out, and go into a store, buy something at retail, or buy something where you know every place you go it's going to be priced exactly the same," she said. "There's no challenge in that. It's just not as much fun." □



Elise Ariel, a 37-year-old legal assistant who says that shopping through a price aggregator site might be practical, but that it would mean an end to her love affair with retail, shops at Century 21 in New York, in November, 2014. Many aggregators do not compare prices of retail items like clothing because neither retailers nor shoppers really want them to.

(Jennifer S. Altman/The New York Times)

or a 10-quart aluminum stockpot.

Sure, thanks to aggregator sites like Orbitz and Cheaptickets.com, comparisons of airline tickets are easy to come by. And there's transparency of pricing on wholesale commodities like butter, eggs and sugar. But that leaves a vast middle ground untouched. There is no Kayak.com for teapots or women's sweaters.

Perhaps that is because nobody - neither consumer nor retailer - wants it.

"We think we want all access, to know everything

information," Goldsmith said, can decrease the odds of a consumer buying anything.

There is a psychological aspect to this, too. Finding deals can make people feel good. For some shoppers, it's about the thrill of the hunt.

"When there's something I've been eyeing and I see it go on sale, it's like God just sort of put it there for me," said Elise Ariel, a 37-year-old legal assistant, as she shopped recently at Century 21 in Manhattan. "How do I feel about sales? Like a moth to a flame."

perspective. Consider what happened when Ron Johnson, former chief executive of J.C. Penney, committed to transparency and predictability and decided the chain would stop running sales. Shoppers waiting for the dopamine hit that comes with the unexpected opportunity for a bargain were disappointed, and customers fled in droves.

Advertising discounts, deals and perceived steals are often how retailers get shoppers in the door in the first place, said Barbara Kahn, a professor of

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US Financial Front:

American home construction drops 2.8% in October

MARTIN CRUTSINGER
AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — Construction of new homes fell slightly in October after a big surge in the previous month, but the weakness was largely driven by the volatile apartment sector. Builders started construction at a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 1.009 million last month, the Commerce Department reported Wednesday. That was a drop of 2.8 percent from September when construction had jumped 7.8 percent to 1.038 million. The weakness stemmed from a 15.4 percent plunge in apartment construction, a category that tends to have big swings from month to month. Construction of single-family homes was up 4.2 percent, the third gain in the past four months. Applications for building permits, a good sign of future activity, rose 4.8 percent in October to 1.08 million.

While overall construction was down in October, analysts said the weakness was confined to apartment building, which had seen a huge increase in September. They noted upward revisions to overall activity in September and August and forecast further gains in the months ahead.

"The improving trend should continue, supported by generally low rates ... and strong job growth," said Jennifer Lee, senior economist at BMO Capital Markets.

Showing strength in October was the South, which posted a 10.1 percent jump on construction starts. All other regions of the country recorded declines. Construction fell 18.5 percent in the Mid-



In this Nov. 4, 2014 photo, construction continues on a boutique apartment building on the southeast corner of Florida Ave. and 14th Street NW, in Washington. Construction of new homes fell slightly in October after a big surge in the previous month, the Commerce Department reported Wednesday, Nov. 19, 2014, but the weakness was largely driven by the volatile apartment sector. (AP Photo/Pablo Martinez Monsivais)

west, 16.4 percent in the Northeast and 10.9 percent in the West.

Solid employment gains, lower mortgage rates and somewhat easier lend-

ing standards are likely to boost housing in coming months. At the same time,

economists are concerned about price gains, which so far have been outpacing wage increases.

Price increases have cut into affordability for would-be buyers, limiting sales growth for new homes and cutting into sales for existing homes.

But in an encouraging sign, U.S. homebuilders' confidence rebounded in November as both sales expectations and buyer traffic improved. The National Association of Home Builders/Wells Fargo index rose to 58 this month, up from 54 in October.

That puts the index just short of September's reading of 59, which was the highest level since November 2005, shortly before the housing bubble burst. Readings above 50 indicate more builders view sales conditions as good rather than poor. □

Fed sees solid US economy, despite new threats

M. CRUTSINGER
AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — Federal Reserve policy-makers discussed a variety of economic threats at their October meeting — from turbulent financial markets to overseas weakness — but decided to move forward with plans to end their landmark bond buying program.

Minutes of the Fed's Oct. 28-29 meeting released on Thursday showed that Fed officials grappled with a number of developments, from sharp moves in U.S. stock prices to increased signs of weakness in such key regions as Europe and Asia. They also expressed concern that inflation, which has been running below the Fed's target of 2 percent, could drift lower

because of falling energy prices and a strengthening U.S. dollar.

A number of board members noted that economic growth might be slower over the medium term than currently expected if foreign economic conditions or financial markets deteriorated significantly, the minutes said. But the officials also expressed confidence that the U.S. economy was on solid footing and expected to keep improving.

The minutes showed that for a second meeting there was a debate over the language outlining the pace of interest rate hikes. Board members debated whether or not to remove language Fed officials have used since the spring that they expected

to keep a key short-term interest rate low for a "considerable time" after halting monthly bond purchases.

The Fed decided to keep the "considerable time" wording because officials worried that its removal could be misinterpreted and cause markets to drive interest rates higher and harm the recovery. Private economists do not expect the Fed to begin raising interest rates until mid-2015 and nothing revealed by the discussion in the minutes was likely to alter their view.

The minutes of the Oct. 28-29 meeting were released with the customary three-week delay. At the October meeting the Fed announced that it was ending its bond buy-

ing program, which it had been gradually reducing since last December. That program was aimed at keeping long-term interest rates low.

The statement did drop a reference it had been making to a "significant underutilization" of labor market resources.

Instead, it said that improving labor market indicators suggested that the "underutilization" of labor market resources was "gradually diminishing." The change was viewed as a sign that the Fed's concerns about weakness in the labor markets had lessened somewhat.

The central bank has kept its target for a key short-term rate at a record low near zero since December 2008. □

Up in the Air:

JetBlue to add baggage fees on cheapest tickets

DAVID KOENIG
AP Airlines Writer

JetBlue will add bag fees and squeeze seats a bit closer together as it tries to boost profit.

The airline said Wednesday that it will create three ticket classes beginning in the first half of 2015, and only the top two include at least one free checked bag.

Other big airlines have added fees on checked bags since 2008, when they needed money to cover rising fuel costs. In the first six months of this year, U.S. air-

lines raised \$1.7 billion from bag fees. JetBlue's decision will leave Southwest as the only major U.S. airline to let all passengers check a bag free.

The changes seemed to please investors — shares of JetBlue Airways Corp. rose more than 4 percent. Analysts said they showed that incoming CEO Robin Hayes was sharply focused on boosting revenue and controlling costs.

But some passengers complained that JetBlue was sacrificing perks that helped the airline win customer-satisfaction awards year after year.

"Airline tickets are already expensive," said Maxwell Haddad, a real estate professional in New York and longtime JetBlue flier. Not charging for the first bag "was an extra level of kindness or service that JetBlue offered. They seemed to value customer service above and beyond other airlines."

JetBlue executives declined to give prices but said they would fluctuate with demand. They said that fewer than half of JetBlue passengers check a bag. □



A man watches a JetBlue airplane take off from John F. Kennedy International Airport in New York. JetBlue Airways Corp. on Wednesday, Nov. 19, 2014 said that it will create three ticket classes, and only the top two include at least one free checked bag. The company didn't say what the bag fee would be for the cheapest flights.

(AP Photo/Seth Wenig)

AP Exclusive:

Why airfare keeps rising despite lower oil prices

SCOTT MAYEROWITZ
AP Airlines Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — U.S. airlines are saving tens of millions of dollars every week because of lower prices for jet fuel, their largest expense. So why don't they share some of the savings with passengers?

Simply put: Airlines have no compelling reason to offer any breaks. Planes are full. Investors want a payout. And new planes are on order.

In fact, fares are going higher. And those bag fees that airlines instituted in 2008 when fuel prices spiked aren't going away either.

In the 12 months ended in September, U.S. airlines saved \$1.6 billion on jet fuel. That helped them post a 5.7 percent profit margin in the first three quarters of this year, robust for the industry but lagging behind

the 10 percent average for the Standard & Poor's 500. In the past six years, airlines have done a great job of adjusting the number of flights to fall just short of demand. As a result, those who want to fly will pay a premium to do so. Airlines are selling a record 85.1 percent of their domestic seats. Thanks to several mega-mergers, four big airlines control the vast majority of flights, leaving very little room for another airline to undercut fares. With that in mind, here's a closer look at what's going on with airfare and the price of jet fuel:

— The average domestic airline ticket during the 12-month period ending in September rose 3.5 percent to \$372.21, according to an Associated Press analysis of data from the Airlines Reporting Corp., which processes ticket transactions

for airlines and travel agencies. That figure doesn't include another \$56 in taxes and fees that passengers pay.

— In the 12-month period ending in September, U.S. airlines burned through nearly 16.2 billion gallons of fuel. They paid an average of \$2.97 a gallon — down from \$3.07 the prior year, according to the Bureau of Transportation Statistics. That 10-cent drop saved the industry \$1.6 billion. Fuel prices have since fallen further. United Airlines estimates it will pay \$2.76 to \$2.81 a gallon during the last three months of the year.

— Put another way: U.S. airlines burn through 311 million gallons of fuel in a week. Lower fuel prices are saving them \$31 million a week.

— Granted, with 753 million passengers carried last

year that averages out to a savings of \$2.15 for each leg of a trip a passenger takes: \$4.30 on a roundtrip non-stop ticket or \$8.60 on a roundtrip connecting itinerary.

— Fuel accounts for 34 percent of an airline's operating costs. The non-fuel costs include salaries and benefits, lease payments on airplanes, maintenance and fees for landing at airports. That doesn't include the cost of reservation systems, marketing or food and drinks.

— Airlines are also reinvesting in their planes, airport terminals and computers. In the first nine months of this year, U.S. carriers spent \$10.2 billion on capital improvements, according to the industry's trade and lobbying group, Airlines for America. That more than \$1 billion a month, the highest pace since the 9/11 ter-

rorist attacks.

— Airlines are on the largest jet-buying spree in the history of aviation, ordering more than 10,000 new planes with manufacturers Airbus and Boeing in the past five years. Those orders are for new, fuel-efficient planes. A temporary drop in oil prices shouldn't slow that process. New jets last 15 to 20 years and the buying is driven by cheap credit almost as much as high oil prices.

— Money is also going back to investors. American Airlines this year paid its first dividend in 34 years, while Delta Air Lines restored its payout last year. Southwest Airlines, which has paid a dividend for more than 37 years, boosted its payout by 50 percent this spring. The airlines are all also buying back large amounts of their own stock. □

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Suicide bomber hits Iraq Kurdish city, four killed

BRAM JANSSEN
Associated Press

IRBIL, Iraq (AP) — A suicide car bomber struck in the heart of the northern Iraqi Kurdish city of Irbil on Wednesday, killing at least four people, a spokesman said. No group immediately claimed responsibility for the midday attack near the ancient citadel in Irbil, capital of the semi-autonomous Kurdish region in northern Iraq, though it bore the hallmarks of the Islamic State group. Irbil has remained mostly calm but it lies close to the front-lines in Iraq's war against the Sunni militant group. The city has taken in thousands of refugees who fled the extremists' summer blitz that captured large swaths of northern and western Iraq, as well as a third of neighboring Syria. Three of the four people killed in Wednesday's explosion were guards, said Hamza Hamid, a spokesman for the Irbil governor. The Iraqi Kurdish health ministry reported at least 22 were wounded.

Hamid said the attack took place "right in front of the main entrance of the building of Irbil governorate," which is near the citadel. Mayor Nawzad Hadi told the state-run Rudaw TV channel that the bomber tried to enter the citadel grounds but failed, so he detonated his explosives-laden car outside the complex. The mayor said properties in the area suffered significant damage but it was unclear if the citadel, claimed to be one of the world's longest continuously inhabited landmarks, was damaged.

German diplomat meets Putin on Ukraine

GEIR MOULSON
Associated Press

BERLIN (AP) — After meeting with Russia's president, Germany's foreign minister said that a de-escalation of the conflict in Ukraine appears far off and reinforced calls for a demarcation line between rebel and government forces in eastern Ukraine to be made a priority.

Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier met for more than an hour late Tuesday with President Vladimir Putin during a visit to Moscow, hours after meeting the Ukrainian leadership in Kiev. The invitation to the Kremlin came at the last minute, adding to a previously scheduled meeting with Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov. "We are, as things stand, unfortunately still a long way from a sustainable de-escalation of the conflict and even further from a political solution," Steinmeier told reporters in Berlin. Steinmeier said he used the opportunity in Moscow to set out priorities in implementing the much-violated cease-fire agreement



German Chancellor Angela Merkel, right, and Foreign Minister Frank Walter Steinmeier arrive for the weekly cabinet meeting at the chancellery in Berlin, Germany, Wednesday, Nov. 19, 2014. The reflections on the right site are from metal coffee cans on the cabinet desk.

(AP Photo/Markus Schreiber)

signed in the Minsk in September and to say "where Russia can make its contribution." He said little about how his meeting with Putin went, but Steinmeier's spokesman, Martin Schaefer, said "the atmosphere of the talks was serious and frank."

As long as there is no agreement on a "line of engage-

ment" between the two sides in eastern Ukraine, "we will not make any progress on other questions that are also part of the Minsk agreement," Steinmeier said.

He said he made clear that the situation on the ground needs to be addressed to avoid further escalation — "whether that has con-

sequences, we will see in two or three weeks at the latest."

Putin's meeting with Steinmeier follows a lengthy encounter with Chancellor Angela Merkel at the Group of 20 summit in Australia over the weekend. Merkel later accused Russia of undermining peace across Europe.

UAE criticizes report on dissent crackdown

AYA BATRAWY
Associated Press

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP) — The United Arab Emirates on Wednesday criticized a new Amnesty International report as "one-sided" and "inaccurate" for describing the country's arrest and prosecution of more than 100 people as an "unprecedented clampdown on dissent."

Amnesty said in its nearly

80-page report released Tuesday that activists who called for reform in 2011 were subjected to ill-treatment and torture. It said confessions made under duress were then used as evidence in "unfair" trials. The report included responses from the UAE government.

In its statement Wednesday, the UAE Foreign Ministry said those arrested were not peaceful activists but

people aligned with the Muslim Brotherhood group who tried to topple the ruling system. It said defendants were given due process.

The UAE branded the Muslim Brotherhood and more than 80 other organizations as "terrorist groups" over the weekend.

Included on that list is the Islamist al-Islah group, believed to have ties to the Brotherhood. Nearly 70 de-

fendants with alleged links to al-Islah were convicted in the UAE and given prison sentences ranging from seven to 15 years. They were accused of seeking to seize power.

The UAE, which does not have political parties and is governed by rulers who inherit their power, perceives the Brotherhood and its supporters as a threat due to their political activism.

Military officer named interim PM in Burkina Faso

HERVÉ TAOKO
ALAN COWELL

© 2014 New York Times
OUAGADOUGOU, Burkina Faso - The military officer who seized power in Burkina Faso after the ouster of President Blaise Compaoré late last month was named Wednesday as prime minister in a transitional government intended to steer the country to elections within a year.

Lt. Col. Isaac Zida, 49, a senior officer in the presidential guard, emerged as the country's army-backed leader after angry crowds burned down Parliament and rampaged through the streets to protest Compaoré's plan to change the constitution and extend his 27-year rule. Zida announced that he was suspending the constitution and taking over as

Compaoré, who had come to power as an army officer in a coup in 1987, fled to neighboring Ivory Coast. The military's move met with opposition from Western countries, including the United States, and from the African Union, the continent's main representative body, which threatened to impose sanctions unless power was returned to civilians.

Early Monday, facing a deadline from the African Union for the military to withdraw, a panel of political, military, religious, traditional and other leaders agreed to appoint Michel Kafando, 72, a former foreign minister and onetime U.N. ambassador, as interim president. Before Zida's new status was announced Wednesday, news reports said, mili-

tary officers had depicted his potential appointment as a trade-off for the army's agreement to name a civilian as transitional president. Earlier reports had described Kafando as the military's choice for interim head of state, suggesting that the army would still wield powerful influence despite apparent gains by advocates of democracy. □

Egypt backs Gulf unity agreement with Qatar

SARAH EL DEEB
ABDULLAH AL-SHIHRI
Associated Press

CAIRO (AP) — After a request from the Saudi monarch, Egypt on Wednesday vowed to support a reconciliation agreement between its Gulf patrons and Qatar aimed at easing regional tensions linked to Doha's support for Islamist groups, including the Muslim Brotherhood. The tensions, which are also connected to Saudi-Qatari competition for influence among Syrian rebel groups, escalated following last year's overthrow of Egyptian President Mohammed Morsi's Brotherhood-backed government. Qatar gave billions of dollars in aid to Morsi's government before it was overthrown by the military amid massive protests against his yearlong rule. Saudi Arabia and other Gulf states have since stepped in with billions of dollars in aid for the mili-

tary-backed government. The UAE and Saudi Arabia perceive the Brotherhood as a threat because

group." Details of the Gulf agreement, which also involved Kuwait, the United Arab

to seek with us the success of this step in the march of Arab solidarity," King Abdullah said in his first

Egyptian President Abdel-Fattah el-Sissi's office immediately responded, saying that Egypt would spare no effort "to support its brothers." It called on regional opinion leaders and journalists to help "heal the rift." Saudi Arabia, the UAE and Bahrain had withdrawn their ambassadors from Qatar in March after Egypt recalled its envoy. Qatar has long been accused of using the Doha-based Al-Jazeera as a mouthpiece for the Muslim Brotherhood and other Islamist groups, allegations denied by the news network. An Egyptian court sentenced three Al-Jazeera English journalists to at least seven years in prison and shut down the network's offices in Cairo. Following several rounds of high-level talks and months of pressure, Qatar recently expelled top Brotherhood figures who had been based there. Egypt had wanted some handed over for inciting violence □



People chant slogans to commemorate the 2011 clashes known as the Mohammed Mahmoud Battle on the street, where the clashes were named after, in Cairo, Egypt, Wednesday, Nov. 19, 2014. The protesters were attempting to commemorate the third anniversary of one of the most brutal confrontations with security forces since the 2011 uprising.

(AP Photo/Ahmed Abd El-Latif) public comments since the Sunday accord. His remarks were carried by the Saudi Press Agency.

of its political activism. Both countries, as well as Egypt's new leadership, have branded it a "terrorist

Emirates and Bahrain, have not been made public. "I appeal to the people and leadership of Egypt

Fracas puts Hong Kong protests in difficult light

MICHAEL FORSYTHE
ALAN WONG
© 2014 New York Times

HONG KONG - The most violent clashes between pro-democracy demonstrators and the police here in a month have underscored the difficulty authorities face in evicting people from the barricaded tent cities that have blocked some of the city's busiest streets since late September. Tuesday night and Wednesday morning, dozens of

demonstrators attempted to break into Hong Kong's legislature, using metal barricades as ramrods to smash through doors and windows of reinforced glass. Police arrested at least six people for assaulting officers and causing "criminal damage" to property. Student groups and pro-democracy lawmakers joined the police in criticizing the participants in the assault, condemning the use of violence. The incident occurred hours after bailiffs, aided by po-

lice, began enforcing court injunctions to clear some roads. Student demonstrators Tuesday put up no resistance as part of a road in the Admiralty district, directly across from the legislature, was opened to traffic. Several protesters said it was time to end the demonstrations, which have failed to win any concessions from either the Hong Kong government or the central authorities in Beijing. But some demonstrators are frustrated with the strat-

egy of nonviolence advocated by the lawmakers, academics and students who first conceived of the sit-in protests as a way to pressure the Hong Kong and Beijing governments to allow free elections in the former British colony. On Aug. 31, China's legislature set strict rules for elections for Hong Kong's top leader, the chief executive, that pro-democracy advocates say guarantee that only people loyal to the Communist government in

Beijing will be allowed to appear on the ballot. That put into motion the demonstrations that erupted a month later. "If we keep sitting here, doing nothing, nothing's going to change," said one 23-year-old man who said he had helped smash windows at the Legislative Council. A worker at a Japanese noodle shop, he called himself Kuroros, declining to give his real name because he feared arrest. □



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Police officials say Miss Honduras, sister apparently killed

FREDDY CUEVAS
ALBERTO ARCE
Associated Press
TEGUCIGALPA, Honduras
(AP) — Two bodies be-

lieved to belong to Miss Honduras 2014 and her sister have been found buried near the spa where they disappeared six days ago, the Honduras National Police director said Wednesday.

Authorities were awaiting confirmation from forensic officials that the victims are Maria Jose Alvarado, 19, and her sister, Sofia, 23, said Gen. Ramon Sabillon. Sabillon said Sofia's boyfriend, Plutarco Ruiz, confessed to killing the sisters and led authorities to the bodies buried in a river bank in a mountainous area of Santa Barbara, about 240 miles (400 kilometers) west of Tegucigalpa.

They were found near La Aguagua spa, where they had gone Thursday to celebrate Ruiz's birthday.

Both women, who grew up in the area, were shot to death and appeared to have been killed the night they disappeared, Sabillon said.

"They were not very astute about assessing the people around them. They were just friendly," the sisters' mother, Teresa Munoz, told Telecentro.

"They were taken out by people they hadn't known very long."

An alleged accomplice, Aris Maldonado, was also being held. Sabillon said the two men buried the bodies near the river in hopes that they would decompose quickly.

He said Ruiz apparently shot his girlfriend, Sofia, because she was dancing with another man. After a fierce argument, he pulled out a pistol and fired at So-

fia first, then at Maria Jose as she tried to flee. The beauty queen was shot at least twice in the back, Sabillon said.

Munoz said Ruiz called her the following morning, acting nervous and claiming the young women had left the party in a car with some other people.

Maria Jose Alvarado was crowned Miss Honduras in April and was expected to compete in the Miss World Pageant in London next month. She was supposed to have left for London this week. A pageant representative said Honduras would not compete in the contest this year, given the tragedy.

Honduras, overrun with streets gangs and drug trafficking, has the highest murder rate in the world for a country not at war, with an estimated 90 to 95 killings per 100,000 people. It is one of Latin America's poorest countries and earlier this year was the main source of a surge in unaccompanied minors migrating to the United States, many to escape the vio-



In this April 26, 2014 photo, Maria Jose Alvarado is crowned the new Miss Honduras in San Pedro, Sula, Honduras. Two bodies believed to belong Alvarado and her sister have been found buried near the spa where they disappeared six days ago, the Honduras National Police director said Wednesday.

(AP Photo)

lence.

Women and girls are increasingly fleeing Honduras and other Central American nations after being kidnapped or raped, with many of them seeking asylum in the United States. Alvarado had also worked as a model on the game program "El Show X O da Dinero" of television personality and former presidential candidate Salvador Nasrallah. He said he was very saddened by the news.

"A lot of girls die this way, but because they're not famous, it doesn't get the attention and the crimes go unpunished," Nasrallah said. "She was a girl of good principles who fell into a trap, a game with guns, and ended up a victim of a violent system."

In the South American nation of Venezuela, which also suffers from high crime, a former Miss Venezuela and popular soap-opera actress, Monica Spear, was killed along with her husband during a robbery in January while she was visiting her homeland. □

Venezuelan leader uses expiring decree powers

HANNAH DREIER
Associated Press
CARACAS, Venezuela (AP) — Venezuelan President

Nicolas Maduro has enacted a slew of new laws as his emergency powers expire. During a four-hour speech on national television, Maduro used decree powers Tuesday to activate 28 new measures, including a luxury tax, a vice tax and the establishment of new economic development zones.

The National Assembly granted Maduro the authority to pass laws without consulting lawmakers last

year. The powers, which expired Wednesday, were supposed to allow him to go after the businesses the ruling socialist party accuses of sabotaging Latin America's biggest oil economy.

But things have only gotten worse for Venezuela's ravaged economy. The country continues to grapple with chronic shortages, suffers from the world's highest inflation, and is now seen by some as on the verge of default.

Decree powers were a favorite tool of Maduro's mentor, the late President

Hugo Chavez, who used them to promulgate dozens of laws that dramatically boosted state control over the economy. Lawmakers granted Chavez the expanded authority four times, despite the outcry of opponents, who called the power to rule by decree a thinly-disguised power grab.

But unlike the charismatic Chavez, who had near-absolute command over his party, Maduro has confronted growing doubts about his leadership during his 1 ½ years in power. His approval ratings now stand

at 30 percent.

On Tuesday, Maduro declared extra taxes on alcoholic beverages and cigarettes, decreed a 15 percent tax on luxury items like yachts and expensive cars, and said that a \$4 billion loan from China would be added to the country's international reserves.

He also said he would adjust rules governing foreign investment to "allow us to attract the investment the country needs in the public and private sector for the development of our priority projects." □

Cuba says doctor catches Ebola in Sierra Leone

**ANNE GARCIA
M. WEISSENSTEIN
Associated Press**

HAVANA (AP) — A member of the 165-member medical team Cuba sent to fight Ebola in Sierra Leone caught the disease when he rushed to help a patient who was falling over, his brother told The Associated Press Wednesday.

Dr. Felix Baez Sarria is being treated by British doctors in Africa but he will be transferred to a special unit in Geneva at the recommendation of the World Health Organization, medical officials said.

The Swiss government said Wednesday that Baez would be brought during the next 48 hours for medical treatment in Geneva. It said a private American airline had been hired for the flight and the treatment would take place in a special room that is isolated from the outpatient and treatment units at the city's University Hospital.

Baez was a military doctor who worked in the Havana army hospital where U.S. contractor Alan Gross has been held for nearly five years, his older brother, Michel Gutierrez Sarria, told the AP.

Gutierrez said he has not been in direct contact with his brother since he fell ill, but the family has been told the doctor, a married father of two, caught Ebola when he saw a sick

person toppling over and his "instinct to help" kicked in, apparently prompting him to violate the strict protocols designed to protect medical workers from Ebola.

"He saw someone who was falling, and went to help them and it seems like

Leone — had gotten Ebola as of earlier this month. The World Health Organization says 102 out of the 128 in Sierra Leone have died.

While doctors and nurses can protect themselves with gear such as aprons, masks, glove and boots, the gear must be care-

respect his decision."

Cuba won global praise for sending at least 256 medical workers to Sierra Leone, Liberia and Guinea to help treat Ebola patients. State officials have emphasized the medics' high state of readiness for the mission, saying the doctors, nurses



Nurse Dalila Martinez, trainer of the Cuban medical team sent to Sierra Leone, washes her gloved hands during a practice drill at a training camp, in Havana, Cuba. A member of the 165-member team caught Ebola when he rushed to help a patient who was falling over, his brother told The Associated Press Wednesday, November 19, 2014.

(AP Photo/Ladyrene Perez, Cubadebate)

that's how he got contaminated," Gutierrez said.

Ebola is spread through direct contact with the bodily fluids of sick patients — including blood, feces and urine. Health workers have been particularly vulnerable to contracting the virus because of their proximity to the sick. At least 570 health care workers — including 128 in Sierra

fully and methodically removed to avoid contamination. A small mistake can prove fatal if the fluids on the protective clothing touche a doctor or nurse's skin.

"We know he's stable and what we want is for him to get better," Gutierrez said. "My brother knew the risks of going to Sierra Leone but he stepped up and we

and support staff received weeks of instruction in protective measures and equipment.

Once in Africa, the Cubans got two to three weeks of additional training before heading into the field. They were to be quarantined in Africa for weeks at the end of their six-month mission before returning to Cuba. □

LATIN BRIEFS

Colombia girl's father had her ingest cocaine

BOGOTA, Colombia (AP) —

An 11-year-old girl is in critical condition after doctors removed from her stomach 104 cocaine-filled capsules her father made her swallow to smuggle drugs to Europe, police said Wednesday. Officers are hunting for the girl's father, who was seen on closed circuit television rushing Monday into an emergency room in Cali with his daughter in his arms, then leaving coolly minutes later. The capsules contained about a half-kilogram (more than a pound) of narcotics, police said. Police raided the man's home and say they found a plane ticket to Madrid in the girl's name. "In 30 years of service I've seen all kinds of strategies to smuggle drugs but nothing as reprehensible as this," Gen. Hoover Penilla, commander of the Cali police, told The Associated Press. □

Jailed leader in Venezuela to protest his trial

CARACAS, Venezuela (AP) —

Jailed Venezuelan opposition leader Leopoldo Lopez says he will skip his own trial to draw attention to a United Nations request for his freedom. Lopez gave an impassioned speech in court Tuesday saying he would waive his right to be present at hearings until an appeals court rules on whether to comply with U.N. calls for his freedom. The U.N. Working Group on Arbitrary Detentions and the body's top human rights official have urged his release. Last week, the judge overseeing Lopez's case ruled that the U.N. finding was nonbinding, and merely a statement in favor of Lopez. His lawyers immediately appealed. Lopez has been jailed since February for his role in the street demonstrations that shook the socialist country earlier this year. He faces charges of inciting violence. □

Rebels back Colombia peace talks after capture

**ANDREA
JOSHUA
Associated Press**

HAVANA (AP) — Colombia's largest rebel group energetically defended negotiations aimed at ending a half-century insurgency even as those talks hung in the balance following the rebels' surprise capture of an army general.

President Juan Manuel Santos suspended the talks after the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia captured Gen. Ruben Dario Alzate and two others as they traveled on a

remote river in western Colombia over the weekend. On the second anniversary of the start of talks, FARC commander best known by his alias Ivan Marquez said the biggest achievement so far is a growing sense of reconciliation among Colombians.

But progress is being undermined by the guerrillas' latest actions, which have infuriated Colombian officials. In addition to the capture of Alzate, a U.S.-trained general who oversaw a counterinsurgency task force, FARC members in the past two weeks have

captured two soldiers during a firefight in northeastern Colombia and have killed two Indians.

Yielding to rebels' demand for a bilateral cease-fire would be political suicide for Santos, who has long rejected such an option amid criticism from conservative opponents and military officials who say it would allow the guerrillas to regroup after a decade of heavy battlefield losses. Statements by rebel leaders in Havana suggest they want a quick solution to the impasse. The two sides have already agreed on

wide-reaching agreements on agrarian reform, political participation for the FARC and how to jointly combat illicit drugs in what was long the world's largest cocaine producer. Marquez said Wednesday that it's up to the FARC's military commander in Colombia's jungles, who is known as Timochenko, to decide Alzate's fate. Still, he said he trusted that the International Red Cross and the peace process' international guarantors, including Cuba and Norway, could play a role in securing his release if needed. □



Aruba Says 'Masha Danki' to Our Loyal Island Visitors!



Haberkorn of New Jersey, Heather Hull of New Jersey, Garry and Claudia Hull of New Jersey, Clarence and Victoria Reinstra of New Jersey, Robert and Jo-Ann Haberkorn of New Jersey, and Robert and Mary-Ann Piroha of New York! The certificates were presented by Ms. Darline S. de

Cuba representing Aruba Tourism Authority together with Mrs. Gloria Devo, who conducted the ceremony held at Divi Village. The top reasons for returning provided by the honorees were the Fantastic Sunsets, Beautiful Blue Ocean, Friendly Aruban Hospitality and the Local Restaurants!



EAGLE BEACH - Recently the Aruba Tourism Authority honored several loyal island guests as Distinguished Visitors and Goodwill Ambassadors at Divi Village. The symbolic honorary titles are presented in the name of the Minister of Tourism as a token of appreciation to guests who visit Aruba between 10-and-20 consecutive years. All the honorees are members of Divi Village and have been enjoying the island every year. The honorees are Joseph



De Palm Island Introduces Exciting New Power Snorkel!



BALASHI - De Palm Island has long been one of the best places to snorkel in Aruba and now with the introduction of Power Snorkeling the experience is enhanced to a whole new level. The Power Snorkel allows guests to float and maneuver effortlessly through the water with a

sea scooter which is held by hand in front of you and pulls you through the water. Benefits are that you don't have to use your legs for swimming and you can cover a larger snorkel area allowing you spend all your time enjoying the reef and fish. The sea scooter delivers speed of up to 2.5 mph and is light enough to carry in one hand.

The coral reef at De Palm Island is one of Aruba's most spectacular snorkel sites and well known for its many Blue Parrotfish. Power Snorkel Guided Tours are organized daily (except Sundays) in the morning and afternoonso make sure to sign up the moment you book your entrance or after arrival on De Palm Is-

land.

Power Snorkel can be booked as an additional activity to De Palm Island, Aruba's only all-inclusive destination at an affordable all-inclusive price. Whether you are a family looking for a day of fun and adventure together or a couple seeking to escape the hustle and bustle of the busy beach area for some relaxation and pampering, this island offers something for everyone! Just bring your towel, swimwear and camera and enjoy. A day at De Palm Island includes alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages, breakfast and lunch buffet, beaches and beach chairs, palapas, unlimited banana boat rides, a waterpark, snorkeling and much more. For more details about Power Snorkel visit De Palm Tours Concierge and Activity Desk in your hotel or www.depalmstours.com. T.: (+297) 522-4500. □



Catch your own dinner with Driftwood!

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ORANJESTAD - The downtown marina is home of Driftwood Fishing Charters, the successful fisherman of the established seafood restaurant Driftwood in Oranjestad. Driftwood owner Herby

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sound was great (not too loud). The ambiance was very sexy with beautiful waitresses that constantly checked if everything was ok with us, thumbs up for the amazing service. Karaoke was very good, funny and entertaining. The highlight of the night for me was the watermelon, never tasted something that great before! I had a lot of fun. I am definitely recommending Sand Bar." □



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In this April 16, 2014, file photo, Brooklyn Nets' Jason Collins shoots against the Cleveland Cavaliers during an NBA basketball game in Cleveland. Associated Press

Collins, NBA's 1st openly gay player, retires

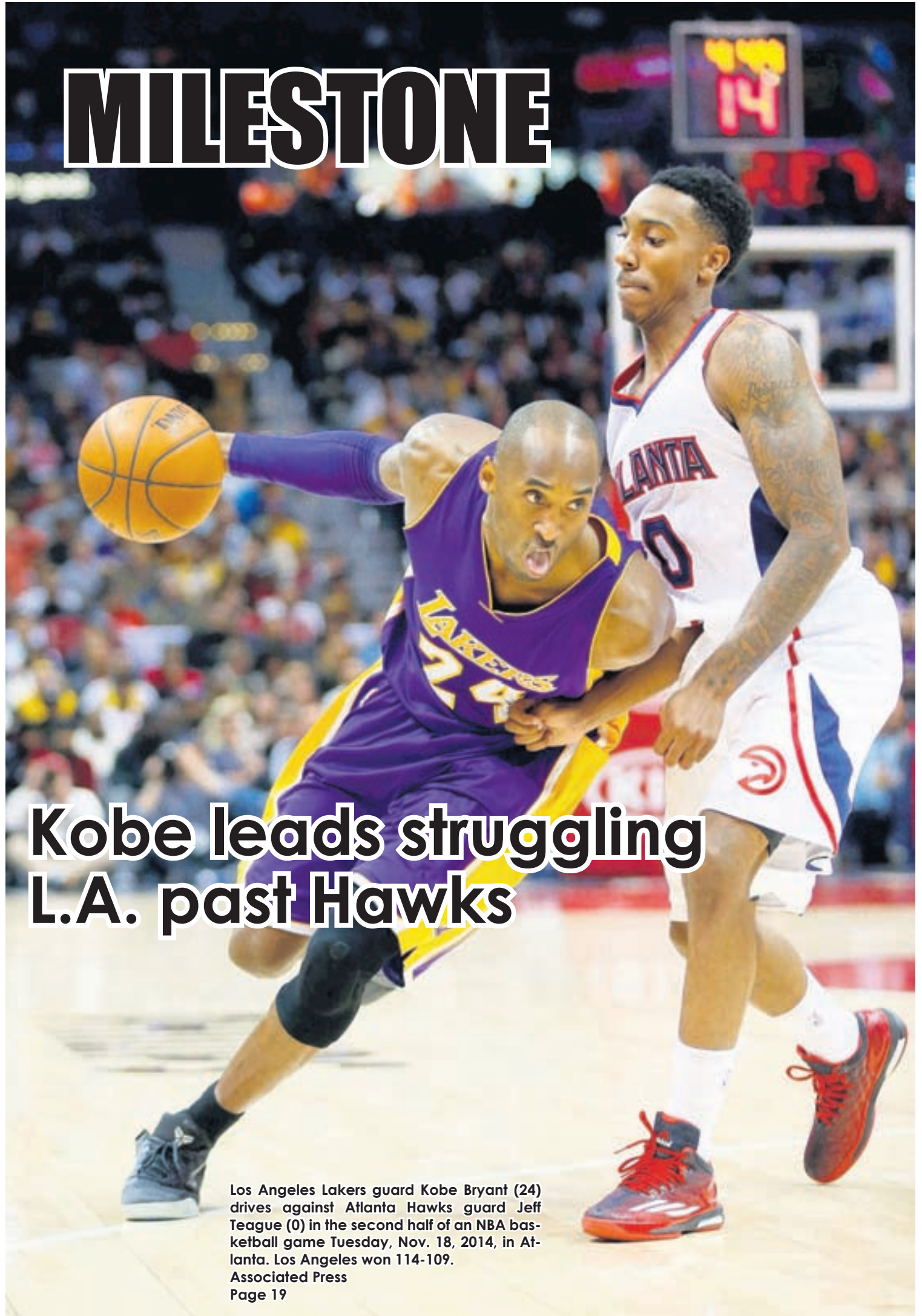
NEW YORK (AP) — Jason Collins, the first openly gay man to play in one of the four major North American professional leagues, announced his retirement Wednesday after 13 years in the NBA.

The 35-year-old Collins disclosed his plans in a first-person story for Sports Illustrated. It's the same forum he used in April, 2013, to publicly reveal his sexuality. He joined the Brooklyn Nets in February and played 22 games for the team, but was not on the roster this season.

"It feels wonderful to have been part of these milestones for sports and for gay rights, and to have been embraced by the public, the coaches, the players, the league and history," Collins wrote. Collins started his career with the New Jersey Nets in 2001 and rejoined the franchise in Brooklyn last February. He revealed at the end of the 2013 season that he is gay, but was a free agent and remained unsigned until the Nets needed another big man.

Continued on page 19

MILESTONE



Kobe leads struggling L.A. past Hawks

Los Angeles Lakers guard Kobe Bryant (24) drives against Atlanta Hawks guard Jeff Teague (0) in the second half of an NBA basketball game Tuesday, Nov. 18, 2014, in Atlanta. Los Angeles won 114-109. Associated Press
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Lawyer asks judge to approve NFL concussion deal

MARYCLAIRE DALE

Associated Press

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — The NFL on Wednesday urged a judge to approve an estimated \$1 billion settlement of concussion lawsuits despite concerns raised by former players or survivors who feel left out.

The 65-year fund would resolve thousands of lawsuits that accuse the NFL of long hiding what it knew about concussions and brain injuries to keep players on the field.

The NFL now expects 6,000 of nearly 20,000 retired players — or 28 percent — to suffer from Alzheimer's disease or at least moderate dementia someday. Their average payout would be about \$190,000. The awards reach several million dollars for Lou Gehrig's disease or Parkinson's disease.

"The NFL ... should have done the right thing years ago, and it can do the right thing now," said Eleanor Perfetto of Annapolis, Maryland, who objects to the steep cuts in awards given to men diagnosed later in life.

Her husband, Ralph Wenzel, had both Alzheimer's disease and chronic traumatic encephalopathy, or CTE, when he died in 2010. He was 69 and had been ill for more than a decade. Some critics feel the fund lets the NFL off lightly, given its \$10 billion in annual revenues. Others complain that there are no awards for depression, mood swings, dizziness and other problems they link to football concussions.

A chief concern is that the plan leaves out future payments for CTE, which some call the signature disease of football. The estates of players who died and were diagnosed with CTE from 2006 to 2014 can seek up to \$4 million, but future deaths are excluded to avoid "incentivizing" suicide. The brain decay cannot currently be diagnosed in the living.

"The research in this area is in its infancy. (It) would be hotly contested at trial," NFL lawyer Bruce Birenboim



Co-lead players' lawyer Christopher Seeger, center right, and client former NFL player Shawn Wooden, center left speak with members of the media after a hearing on the proposed NFL concussion settlement Wednesday, Nov. 19, 2014, outside of the U.S. Courthouse in Philadelphia.

Associated Press

argued. "The resolution was that CTE, per se, wasn't covered, but that significant symptoms were."

Lawyer Thomas Demetrio suggested the deal is a steal for both the lead players' lawyers who stand to divide \$112 million and the NFL.

"The NFL, by this settlement, will never have to say what they knew, when they knew it, and CTE — Poof! It's gone," said Demetrio,

who represents the family of former Chicago Bears safety Dave Duerson. A fan favorite, Duerson's life was on the decline before he fatally shot himself in the chest in 2011. He left behind notes asking that his brain be tested for CTE. The tests were positive.

The NFL insisted that it would have strong legal defenses if the cases proceed to trial.

The league's lawyers have

argued that the dispute belongs in mediation under the contract, that former players can't prove which injury and that many former players filed suit too late.

"It would have been an expensive, scorched-earth litigation (without a settlement). We know that because of other parties that have litigated with the NFL," lead plaintiffs' lawyer Christopher Seeger argued

Wednesday.

On the other hand, the NFL would have to open its files before trial and potentially disclose damaging information.

Former Indianapolis Colts tight end Ben Utecht testified about the five concussions he suffered during a career that earned him a 2007 Super Bowl ring. He is now married with three young daughters.

"I do have memory issues. That's why I walked away," Utecht, 33, said after the hearing. "The thought of (my daughters) losing their dad, before they actually lose their dad, is challenging."

Senior U.S. District Judge Anita Brody granted preliminary approval of the plan in July after the NFL lifted a proposed \$765 million cap. The total includes \$75 million for baseline testing and \$10 million for research. With inflation and lawyer fees, the NFL could pay out \$1 billion or more over 65 years.

"The league really is proud of this settlement," Birenboim said.

Brody is expected to rule on final approval in the next few months.

LPGA gets title sponsor for 1st major

DOUG FERGUSON

AP Golf Writer

NAPLES, Fla. (AP) — The LPGA Tour added one new tournament and one big sponsor.

Along with releasing another strong schedule for 2015, the LPGA Tour announced Tuesday that All Nippon Airways has signed a five-year deal to be the title sponsor of the first major championship of the year in the California desert.

The ANA Inspiration replaces the Kraft Nabisco Championship in name only. Still intact are the traditions at Mission Hills Country Club in Rancho Mirage, from Dinah Shore's name on the trophy to the winner jumping in Poppy's Pond and wearing a white robe.

"I think most fans of not just

the LPGA but of golf and sport in general know when they watch that event that this is the event where the winner jumps in the lake," said Karrie Webb, a two-time winner of that major. "I think it's very important that we stay at Mission Hills, and another reason why we're glad ANA was happy to come to Rancho Mirage." The purse will increase to \$2.5 million next year, and is expected to go to at least \$3 million by the end of the contract.

It was the second major in which the LPGA Tour was able to replace a title sponsor. Wegmans ended its sponsorship with the LPGA Championship, and the tour joined with the PGA of America to create the KPMG Women's PGA

Championship.

Only a few years ago, the LPGA Tour had a 23-tournament schedule.

Now it is up to 33 tournaments, which doesn't include the Solheim Cup that will be played in Germany next September.

The LPGA Tour added one tournament to its schedule — the Coates Golf Championship, which will be played in Ocala, Florida the last week in January. That gives the LPGA Tour a Florida tournament in January for the first time since 2001.

That will be followed by the Pure Silk-Bahamas LPGA Classic, meaning players have two tournaments before its three-week Asia and Australia swing.

"We wanted to make sure

that our U.S. fan base and media connected with us before we went to Australia, Thailand and Singapore, which we didn't do a few years back," Commissioner Mike Whan said.

The women's majors still are up against the men. The ANA Inspiration is a week before the Masters. The KPMG Women's PGA Championship is the week before the U.S. Open. And the U.S. Women's Open is a week before the men play the British Open at St. Andrews.

The LPGA has a six-week swing through Asia at the end of the year, as usual, before winding up with the Lorena Ochoa Invitational in Mexico and the season-ending CME Group Tour Championship.

NBA Capsules

Bryant leads Lakers to rare win over Atlanta

The Associated Press

ATLANTA (AP) — Kobe Bryant scored 28 points as the Los Angeles Lakers won for only the second time this season, beating the Atlanta Hawks 114-109 in the NBA on Tuesday.

Bryant's biggest shot came with 1:11 remaining, when he backed in against Thabo Sefolosha and made a fadeaway jumper despite being fouled. Bryant completed the three-point play, giving the Lakers a 108-102 lead.

The Hawks had a chance to force overtime after the Lakers (2-9) failed to put it away at the line. But Los Angeles smothered long-range threat Kyle Korver, leaving Pero Antic to take an open 3-pointer. It clanked off the rim and the Lakers grabbed the loose ball to seal the victory.

Paul Millsap led Atlanta with 29 points.

Carlos Boozer added 20 points for the Lakers, and Nick Young, coming back from a thumb injury, had 17 in his first game of the



Los Angeles Lakers guard Kobe Bryant, left, goes to the basket as Atlanta Hawks' Paul Millsap defends in the second half of an NBA basketball game Tuesday, Nov. 18, 2014, in Atlanta. Los Angeles won 114-109.
Associated Press

season.

BUCKS 117, KNICKS 113

MILWAUKEE (AP) — Ersan Ilyasova had 20 points as

the rebuilding Bucks beat the Knicks to lift their record

above .500 for the first time in more than a year.

Zaza Pachulia added season highs of 14 points and 13 rebounds for Milwaukee, which improved to 6-5 on the year. It was the first time the team had a winning record since March 20, 2013, when it was 34-33. New York cut a 26-point deficit to 115-113 with 7.9 seconds left, but Milwaukee managed to hold on. Carmelo Anthony had 26 points for the Knicks, and Tim Hardaway Jr. scored 24.

The balanced Bucks had seven players score in double figures.

JAZZ 98, THUNDER 81

SALT LAKE CITY (AP) — Alec Burks had 20 points and a career-high 14 rebounds as the Jazz beat the reeling Thunder.

Enes Kanter added 16 points and a season-high 15 boards for Utah, which enjoyed a 55-44 edge on the glass. Trey Burke scored 11 of his 17 points in the second half, and finished with nine assists.

Oklahoma City has lost three straight and seven of nine. Jeremy Lamb led the Thunder with 19 points, and Steven Adams had 11 points and eight rebounds. Playing without the injured Kevin Durant and Russell Westbrook, Oklahoma City shot 35.7 percent (30 for 84) from the field.

PELICANS 106, KINGS 100
SACRAMENTO, California (AP) — Anthony Davis had 28 points and nine rebounds to lead the Pelicans past the Kings in a matchup between two of the Western Conference's most surprising teams this season.

Ryan Anderson hit four 3-pointers and scored 22 points for the Pelicans, who outscored the Kings 31-15 in the third and improved to 6-4 on the year.

Tyreke Evans had 18 points, and Eric Gordon scored 17.

DeMarcus Cousins had 24 points and 17 rebounds for Sacramento, which dropped to 3-2 at home. Darren Collison added 13 points and 11 assists. □

Continued from page 17

They turned to the 7-foot Collins, who helped them reach the NBA Finals in 2002 and 2003. He signed a 10-day contract, playing his first game as an out gay man on Feb. 23 on the road against the Los Angeles Lakers to a warm ovation. He stayed the rest of the season.

Nets general manager Billy King congratulated Collins on a "distinguished NBA career" in a statement.

"He was an integral part of the back-to-back Eastern Conference Championship teams," King said. "We wish him well as he embarks on a new chapter in his career."

Nets spokesman Aaron Harris said Collins is expected to address the media at the Barclays Center on Wednesday night before the Nets game with the Milwaukee Bucks.

Bucks coach Jason Kidd was Brooklyn's coach last

year, and Collins singled him out for the "courage" he showed in bringing him on board.

"It had been argued that no team would want to take on a player who was likely to attract a media circus from the outset and whose sexuality would be a distraction," he wrote. "I'm happy to have helped put those canards to rest."

The Stanford graduate went in the first round of the 2001 NBA draft, picked 18th overall. He also played for Memphis, Minnesota, Atlanta, Boston and Washington. He averaged 3.6 points and 3.7 rebounds in 20.4 minutes during his career. Collins wore No. 98 in his final seasons in the league to honor Matthew Shepard, a gay college student in Wyoming, who was killed in 1998.

Collins said his most poignant moment came during his third game back last season, when he met Shepard's family in Denver. Following Collins' revela-



In this Feb. 27, 2014, file photo, Brooklyn Nets center Jason Collins considers a question from reporter before the Nets' NBA basketball game against the Denver Nuggets in Denver.
Associated Press

tion, Missouri defensive end Michael Sam came out in February and was drafted by the NFL's St. Louis Rams. He was later cut by the Rams and released from the Dallas Cowboys practice squad last month.

In April, University of Massachusetts guard Derrick Gordon became the first openly gay player in Division I men's basketball.

Billie Jean King called Collins "an influencer on and off the basketball court" in a statement to The Associated Press. Collins thanked the former tennis great for her support when he first came out.

"I hope his decision to live his truth and do so on his own terms will inspire him on the next phase of his journey," King said.

NHL Capsules

Howard makes 28 saves, Red Wings beat Blue Jackets

The Associated Press

COLUMBUS, Ohio (AP) — Jimmy Howard made 28 saves for his 19th career shutout, and Tomas Tatar and Tomas Jurco each had a goal and an assist to lift the Detroit Red Wings past the Columbus Blue Jackets 5-0 in the NHL on Tuesday. Gustav Nyquist, Riley Sheahan and Darren Helm also scored and Brendan Smith added two assists to help Detroit end a three-game road winless skid. The Red Wings scored twice on the power play and put the game out of reach with three third-period goals. Columbus' two-game winning streak — after a clubbing nine straight losses — ended as the Red Wings won most of the puck battles to control the tempo. Columbus did have scoring chances, but they failed to generate sustained pressure.

Sergei Bobrovsky, who finished with 35 saves, didn't have his best form in his second start in row since missing eight with a broken finger.

PENGUINS 4, CANADIENS 0 MONTREAL (AP) — Marc-Andre Fleury made 27 saves for his league-leading fourth shutout of the season as Pittsburgh ended Montreal's six-game winning streak.

Beau Bennett and Steve Downie had first-period goals for the Penguins, and Brandon Sutter and captain Sidney Crosby each scored in the second. Pittsburgh has now won 10 of its



Detroit Red Wings' Jimmy Howard, left, makes a save against Columbus Blue Jackets' Adam Cracknell during the second period of an NHL hockey game Tuesday, Nov. 18, 2014, in Columbus, Ohio.

last 11.

Carey Price stopped 18 shots for Montreal.

Fleury, who made a couple of key saves early on, is 8-1-0 with a .944 save-percent-age in his last nine starts dating back to Oct. 25.

ISLANDERS 5, LIGHTNING 2 UNIONDALE, New York (AP) — Cal Clutterbuck, Mikhail Grabovski and Ryan Strome scored in the second period to lift the New York Islanders.

Brock Nelson and Casey Cizikas also scored and Jaroslav Halak stopped 26 shots for the Islanders, who

got a measure of revenge for a 5-2 loss at Tampa on Saturday that ended their five-game winning streak.

Alex Killorn and Ondrej Palat scored for the Lightning and Evgeni Nabokov finished with 31 saves.

Clutterbuck tied the score at 1-1 with a short-handed goal 39 seconds into the middle period. Grabovski and Strome then scored 1:03 apart to give the Islanders a two-goal lead with 6 1/2 minutes to go in the period. Nelson's power-play goal in the opening minute of the third made it

4-1.

BRUINS 2, BLUES 0

BOSTON (AP) — Tuukka Rask made 33 saves for his first shutout of the season as the Bruins ended a six-game home losing streak against St. Louis.

Patrice Bergeron and Torey Krug scored for the Bruins, who were outshot 33-17. Rask earned his 24th career shutout.

Boston played sound defense throughout against a Blues team that had won 10 of 11. The Bruins limited St. Louis to mostly shots from outside, and Rask didn't

leave many rebound opportunities.

Boston hadn't won at home against the Blues since Jan. 30, 2001.

KINGS 5, PANTHERS 2

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Jeff Carter had a power-play goal and an assist during Los Angeles' four-goal second period, and Jonathan Quick made 30 saves in the Kings' victory over Florida.

Kings defensemen Matt Greene and Robyn Regehr both scored rare goals during the defending Stanley Cup champions' highest-scoring period of the season.

Marian Gaborik and captain Dustin Brown added power-play goals in Los Angeles' second straight victory after losing seven of nine.

Jimmy Hayes and Jussi Jokinen scored for the Panthers, who have lost five of seven. Roberto Luongo stopped 21 shots in two periods before Al Montoya relieved him for the third.

SABRES 4, SHARKS 1

BUFFALO, New York (AP) — Brian Gionta had two goals and an assist in leading Buffalo past San Jose in front of a sparse, snowstorm-depleted crowd.

Nicolas Deslauriers and Brian Flynn also scored for Buffalo, which won its eighth straight against San Jose, dating to the 2009-10 season. Jhonas Enroth stopped 20 shots over the final two periods after replacing starter Michal Neuvirth who sustained a lower body injury in the first period.

Associated Press

Love thinks Ryder Cup has too many people involved

DOUG FERGUSON

AP Golf Writer

NAPLES, Florida (AP) — One of the messages Davis Love III wants to bring to the 11-member Ryder Cup Task Force is that it has gotten too big.

He said the amount of scheduled time at the Ryder Cup is about double what the Americans spend at the Presidents Cup, which is understandable because the Ryder Cup gets about double the in-

terest. What really concerns him is the size of the team party. Love, the captain in 2012 at Medinah, said the U.S. team has expanded so much over the years that it is losing its intimacy. He thought back to his first Ryder Cup team in 1993, when Tom Watson was the captain and had a friend as his assistant. The players and their wives were in the team room and "all we did was hang out."

"Now it's all the PGA offi-

cers, all their wives, all the caddies, all their wives, all the 'strap hangers' in this big room," Love said last month at the McGladrey Classic. "The intimacy of the team has changed. ... They do a lot for us to give us the Ryder Cup. But do they need to be in the room? It's like a traveling circus. When you go to dinner, it's not the team that goes to dinner. It's 30 more people."

Love said when he was an

assistant captain in Wales, he planned to drive his own cart around Celtic Manor. Instead, a PGA officer was assigned as his cart driver. It actually worked out well because of the rain, but it was another example of the U.S. team becoming the U.S. entourage.

"It's grown to where instead of being 12, 13 guys and sometimes the wives ... to this huge mass of people," Love said. "A lot of things have changed. It's

not bad. It's just we need to get back to what the players want to make it feel like a team."

Love said the first meeting of the task force was to be held either the first or second week in December. The PGA of America has its annual meeting the weekend before Thanksgiving. He said a second meeting is expected the first week of February, around the time of the Farmers Insurance Open at Torrey Pines.

Union, NFL at odds over personal conduct policy

ROB MAADDI

AP Pro Football Writer

Saying the NFL is "making things up as they go along," players' union chief DeMaurice Smith wants the league and its owners to take disciplining players out of the hands of Commissioner Roger Goodell.

Already at odds over the process used to punish Ray Rice, the dispute heightened on Tuesday when the league suspended Minnesota Vikings running back Adrian Peterson for the rest of the season for using a branch to discipline his 4-year-old son.

The central issue remains the same for both sides: Finding a way to fairly hold players accountable for transgressions that damage the credibility and image of the league and its players. The union wants disciplinary power transferred from Goodell to a neutral arbitrator. The league, so far, doesn't agree.

And while the league and the NFL Players Association want to change the personal conduct policy, the sides disagree on how to do it. The union wants to bargain for changes to the policy, while the NFL wants to implement changes with union input the same way it changes rules on the field, like when it moved kickoffs to the 35-yard line. Smith told The Associated Press in an email that the league indicated it was open to discussing the policy as recently as two months ago, but didn't follow through in coming to the table.

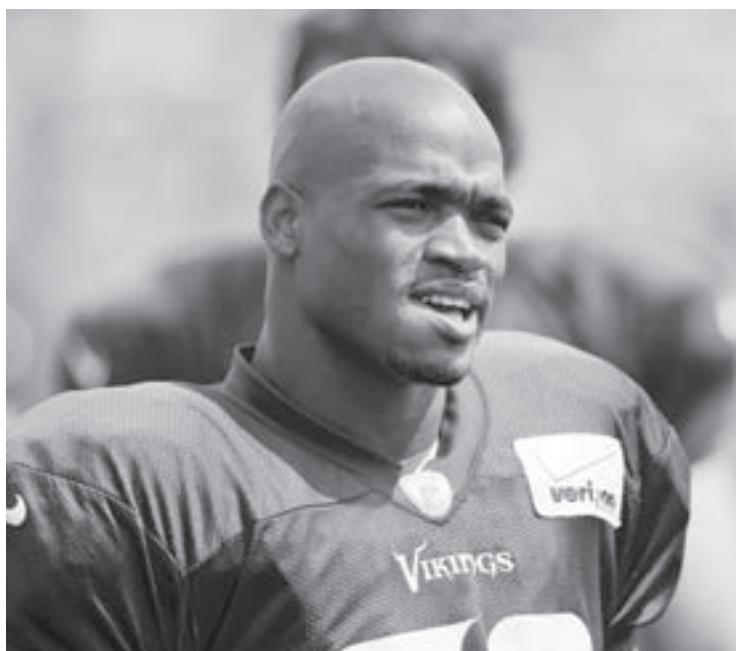
He said those discussions were distinct from the union representing Peterson in his case, though on a parallel track.

"There is one fact that does make those things similar though, and that is the NFL is clearly making things up as they go along," Smith said on Tuesday. "Our goal is to pursue a new personal conduct policy that is fair, transparent and consistent. The only way that happens is if the NFL and the owners commit to col-



In this Oct. 8, 2014, file photo, NFL commissioner Roger Goodell speaks during a news conference following a meeting of NFL owners and executives in New York.

Associated Press



This July 31, 2014, file photo shows Minnesota Vikings running back Adrian Peterson during NFL football training camp in Mankato, Minn. The NFL suspended Adrian Peterson without pay for at least the remainder of the season. The league said Tuesday, Nov. 18, 2014, it informed the Minnesota Vikings running back he will not be considered for reinstatement before April 15 for violating the NFL personal conduct policy.

Associated Press

lective bargaining."

Troy Vincent, the NFL's executive vice president of football operations, countered that Goodell's authority was collectively bargained with the union in 2011, while the personal conduct policy in place for nearly 20 years has never been part of contract negotiations.

"The union agreed to the commissioner maintaining authority to discipline. The league believes it is in the best interest of football to retain that authority," Vincent said. "The league is following the process dic-

tated by the CBA."

The union and players helped to revise the personal conduct policy in 2007, Vincent said. He said the league has had multiple meetings with the union this year on revising the policy using the same approach.

The rules in place have some players and agents wondering if the NFL has too much power and whether the union fell short by agreeing to give Goodell central power over discipline in 2011.

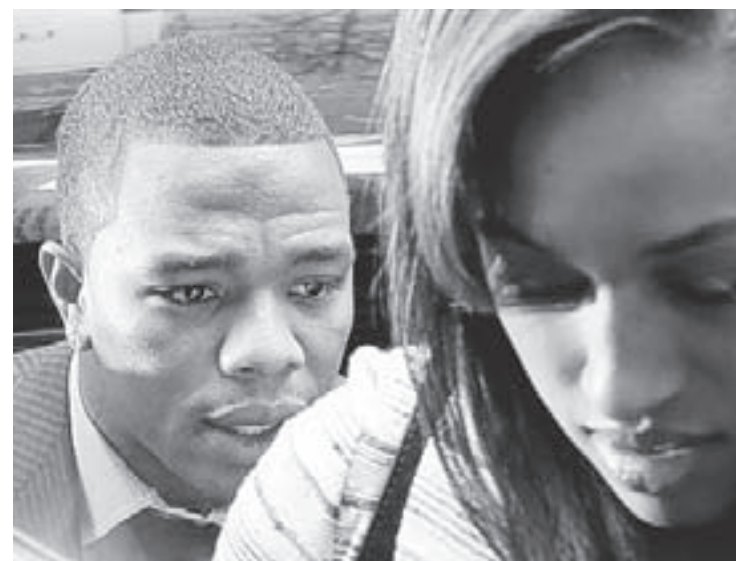
Agent Jerrold Colton, who represents New Orleans

tackle Jahri Evans, Pittsburgh cornerback William Gay and six-time Pro Bowl kicker David Akers, said the union's failure to negotiate changes to the personal conduct policy in 2011 was a "tremendous oversight." "I felt strongly at the time that it was a mistake and clearly it's turned out to be one for the players the way it's played out, and we're stuck with it for another six years," said Colton, who said the players and league absolutely need an independent, third-party arbitrator.

"Due process exists in most places in the United States

will not be considered for reinstatement before April 15 for his violation of the personal conduct policy — the first example of a crackdown on players involved with domestic violence since stricter rules were put in place earlier this season.

The union, which announced it plans an appeal on behalf of Peterson, is demanding a neutral arbitrator to oversee the hearing in the same way Rice's case was handled. Rice is waiting for an arbitrator to decide whether his indefinite suspension should be upheld or over-



Ray Rice arrives with his wife Janay Palmer for an appeal hearing of his indefinite suspension from the NFL, Wednesday, Nov. 5, 2014, in New York.

Associated Press

except in the NFL."

Pittsburgh safety Mike Mitchell said the personal conduct policy needs more well-defined terms and clear guidelines based on precedent.

"Right now it's kind of you know, one man has all the power, and I don't know if that's ever really a good thing. Roger does his best but he's got a lot on his plate that he has to control," Mitchell said. "I'm not just trying to bash him or come down on him, but players would feel better if he wasn't just judge, jury and executioner."

Peterson pleaded no contest on Nov. 4 to misdemeanor reckless assault in Texas for injuries to his 4-year-old son with a branch. He said he intended no harm, only discipline. Goodell told Peterson he

turned. Goodell made Rice's suspension more severe when video of Rice hitting his then-fiancee was released online.

Goodell has said he hopes to have a new personal conduct policy ready before the Super Bowl.

Vincent said the league's internal process — including investigation, consulting independent experts, suspending players with pay and ultimately determining discipline — has been fair and transparent while following the collective bargaining agreement.

"In reality, those who are most upset with the personal conduct policy are those who violate it," Vincent said. "The vast majority of players do not come into contact with the discipline process." □

Stanton signs record \$325 million baseball deal

STEVEN WINE

AP Sports Writer

MIAMI (AP) — Giancarlo Stanton signed his record \$325 million, 13-year contract with the Miami Marlins at a news conference formally announcing the deal on Wednesday.

Stanton signed the deal while sitting next to Marlins owner Jeffrey Loria. The attendance-challenged franchise drew nearly 100 members of the media for the occasion.

The contract is the most lucrative ever for an American athlete, and the longest in Major League Baseball history. It includes a no-trade clause, and Stanton can opt out after six years and \$107 million.

"We're here to celebrate a landmark agreement, not only for the Marlins organization but for our entire community," Loria said. Stanton said the deal points the Marlins in a winning direction.

"This is one building block toward a better future and a new way of life down here in Miami," he said. "I'm glad to be here for my foreseeable future."



Miami Marlins baseball team owner Jeffrey Loria, left, watches as Giancarlo Stanton signs his record \$325 million, 13-year contract at a news conference Wednesday, Nov. 19, 2014, in Miami. Associated Press

Stanton wasn't due to become eligible for free agency until after the 2016 season, and signing the outfielder to a long-term agreement was considered a long shot.

The Marlins haven't reached the playoffs since 2003, and Stanton was skeptical about Loria making the necessary financial commitment to field a con-

tender.

The Marlins hadn't held a celebratory news conference on such a scale since their last spending spree, just before their ballpark opened in 2012. They went 69-93, leading to a payroll purge.

Their average attendance of 21,386 was 28th among the 30 major league teams. Stanton's contract tops

the \$292 million, 10-year agreement Miguel Cabrera agreed to with Detroit in March. He receives the first 13-year guaranteed deal in MLB history, topping an April 2012 agreement between Cincinnati and Joey Votto that assured the first baseman of \$251.5 million over 12 years.

"It's an exciting day for Miami, my fans, our fans,"

Stanton said.

Stanton, who turned 25 on Nov. 8, is perhaps the game's most feared slugger. He has 154 homers, including a National League-leading 37 this year.

The two-time All-Star right fielder recently won the NL Hank Aaron Award, and was voted the NL's outstanding player in balloting by his fellow major leaguers. He won a Silver Slugger Award and finished second to Clayton Kershaw in NL MVP voting.

"He wants to be the man, and he's good enough to assume that mantle," Marlins president David Samson said.

Stanton's season ended on Sept. 11 when he was hit in the face by a pitch and suffered fractures in his face and other injuries. Despite missing the final 17 games, he led the NL in homers and slugging for the Marlins, who went 77-85 but ended a three-year streak of last-place finishes in the NL East.

The Marlins have said they're not concerned the injuries will have lingering effects. □

IOC reform agenda gives boost to baseball return

JIM ARMSTRONG

AP Sports Writer

TOKYO (AP) — Baseball and softball's bid to return to the Olympic program got a boost Wednesday as organizers of the 2020 Tokyo Games considered ways the International Olympic Committee's reform agenda could impact planning for the event.

Wrapping up the second day of meetings in the Japanese capital, IOC Vice President John Coates and Olympic organizing chief Yoshiro Mori spoke on how the 40 proposals released Tuesday as part of IOC President Thomas Bach's reform agenda could affect planning for Tokyo 2020.

The proposals would allow host cities to propose the inclusion of one or more events for their games — a move which would clear the way for baseball and



International Olympic Committee, IOC, president German Thomas Bach speaks to journalists after a round table with various athletes from around the world to present the new Olympic agenda 2020 discussions at the Olympic Museum in Lausanne, Switzerland, Tuesday, Nov. 18, 2014. Associated Press

softball to be included in the 2020 Games.

Baseball and softball appeared in the Olympics from 1992 to 2008, but IOC members voted to drop them from the program

after the Beijing Games — the first sports to be excluded since polo in 1936. The sports were eventually replaced by golf and rugby sevens, both of which will join the program at the

2016 Rio Olympics.

"In the case of Japan, including baseball and softball would be a great idea," Mori said at a news conference on Wednesday. "The two sports are very popular in Japan and having them in the program would be a big plus." The reforms, called "Olympic Agenda 2020," will be put to a vote by the full IOC at a special session in Monaco on Dec. 8-9. Barring any surprise, most or all the recommendations are expected to be passed.

The reforms could also allow Tokyo organizers to alter their initial plan of having the majority of venues located within an 8-kilometer (5-mile) radius of the Olympic Village — one of the key components of Tokyo's bid for the games.

Under the new proposals, the IOC would allow "the organization of entire

sports and disciplines outside the host city or, in exceptional cases, outside the host country notably for reasons of geography and sustainability." With cost concerns now causing Japanese Olympic organizers to review their initial plans for the venues, the reforms proposed by the IOC could clear the way for them to move some events outside the proposed 8-kilometer (5-mile) radius. During their two-day visit to Tokyo, members of the IOC's coordination commission visited Saitama Super Arena, a 37,000-seat multipurpose venue about one hour north of Tokyo that has been mooted as a possible alternate location for the Olympic basketball competition.

"It was a great experience when we went to the Saitama Super Arena," Coates said. □

How to teach self-driving cars ethics of the road

JUSTIN PRITCHARD

Associated Press

LOS ANGELES (AP) — A large truck speeding in the opposite direction suddenly veers into your lane.

Jerk the wheel left and smash into a bicyclist? Swerve right toward a family on foot?

Slam the brakes and brace for head-on impact?

Drivers make split-second decisions based on instinct and a limited view of the dangers around them. The cars of the future — those that can drive themselves thanks to an array of sensors and computing power — will have near-perfect perception and react based on preprogrammed logic.

While cars that do most or even all of the driving may be much safer, accidents happen.

It's relatively easy to write computer code that directs the car how to respond to a sudden dilemma. The hard part is deciding what that response should be.

"The problem is, who's determining what we want?" asks Jeffrey Miller, a University of Southern California professor who develops driverless vehicle software. "You're not going to have 100 percent buy-in that says, 'Hit the guy on the right.'"

Companies that are testing driverless cars are not focusing on these moral questions.

The company most aggressively developing self-driving cars isn't a carmaker at all. Google has invested heavily in the technology, driving hundreds of thousands of miles on roads and highways in tricked-out Priuses and Lexus SUVs. Leaders at the Silicon Valley giant have said they want to get the technology to the public by 2017.

For now, Google is focused on mastering the most common driving scenarios, programming the cars to drive defensively in hopes of avoiding the rare instances when an accident is truly unavoidable.



In this Monday, Nov. 18, 2014 photo, University of Southern California professor Jeffrey Miller sits in his car in Los Angeles. Miller develops software that will help the cars of the future drive themselves. Associated Press

"People are philosophizing about it, but the question about real-world capability and real-world events that can affect us, we really haven't studied that issue," said Ron Medford, the director of safety for Google's self-driving car project.

One of those philosophers is Patrick Lin, a professor who directs the ethics and emerging sciences group at Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo.

"This is one of the most profoundly serious decisions we can make. Program a machine that can foreseeably lead to someone's death," said Lin. "When we make programming decisions, we expect those to be as right as we can be."

What right looks like may differ from company to company, but according to Lin automakers have a duty to show that they have wrestled with these complex questions — and publicly reveal the answers they reach.

Lin said he has discussed the ethics of driverless cars with Google as well as automakers including Tesla, Nissan and BMW. As far as he knows, only BMW has formed an internal group to study the issue.

Many automakers remain skeptical that cars will operate completely without

drivers, at least not in the next five or 10 years.

Uwe Hüggen, head of BMW's group technology office in Silicon Valley, said the automaker has brought together specialists in technology, ethics, social impact, and the law to discuss a range of issues related to cars that do ever-more driving instead of people. "This is a constant process going forward,"

Hüggen said.

To some, the fundamental moral question doesn't ask about rare and catastrophic accidents but rather how to balance appropriate caution over introducing the technology against its potential to save lives. After all, more than 30,000 people die in traffic accidents each year in the United States.

"No one has a good an-

swer for how safe is safe enough," said Bryant Walker Smith, a law professor who has written extensively on self-driving cars. The cars "are going to crash, and that is something that the companies need to accept and the public needs to accept." And what about government regulators — how will they react to crashes, especially those that are particularly gruesome or the result of a decision that a person would be unlikely to make? Just four states have passed any rules governing self-driving cars on public roads, and the federal government appears to be in no hurry to regulate them.

In California, the department of motor vehicles is discussing ethical questions with companies, but isn't writing rules.

"That's a natural question that would come up and it does come up," said Bernard Soriano, the department's point man on driverless cars, of how cars should decide between a series of bad choices. "There will have to be some sort of explanation." □

NYC plan would replace pay phones with Wi-Fi hubs

DEEPTI HAJELA

Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Pay phones on New York City streets would become a thing of the past under a plan announced Monday that would replace them with stand-alone devices offering free Wi-Fi and nationwide phone calls as well as mobile phone charging capability.

New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio said LinkNYC, a plan proposed by a group of companies working together under the name CityBridge, had been selected to replace the old pay phone system. Up to 10,000 column-like devices would be placed in all five boroughs starting next year if the plan is approved by the city's Franchise and

Concession Review Committee.

The devices, along with Wi-Fi, would also have touchscreens for users to access city agencies and digital displays for advertising and announcements.

The devices would replace 8,400 pay phones in 6,452 installations around the city. The only pay phones left would be three booth-style pay phones on the Upper West Side that would be preserved as pieces of New York City history.

De Blasio said the plan wouldn't cost city taxpayers anything. He said the money to cover the cost would come through revenues from the advertising. The city said the advertising revenue would bring in \$500 million over the next

12 years.

De Blasio said the system would expand access to broadband.

"With this proposal for the fastest and largest municipal Wi-Fi network in the world — accessible to and free for all New Yorkers and visitors alike — we're taking a critical step toward a more equal, open and connected city," he said.

CityBridge is made up of companies including Qualcomm Incorporated, Comark, Control Group and Titan. The city said the consortium has committed to making the devices in New York City, and the LinkNYC program is expected to create up to 150 jobs in manufacturing, technology and advertising, as well as 650 support jobs. □

Wall Street drifts lower on Fed minutes

ALEX VEIGA
AP Business Writer

U.S. financial markets pulled back slightly from their most recent record highs Wednesday, ending lower for the first time this week.

The Dow Jones industrial average and Standard & Poor's 500 index mostly hovered slightly below the all-time high closes set a day earlier.

Investors sifted through a batch of favorable corporate earnings as they waited for the Federal Reserve to publish the minutes from its late-October policy meeting.

Traders hoped to glean fresh insight into when the central bank will raise a

upward at times during the day. U.S. government bond prices fell.

All told, the S&P 500 index slipped 3.08 points, or 0.2 percent, to 2,048.72.

The Dow fell 2.09 points, or 0.01 percent, to 17,685.73.

The Nasdaq composite shed 26.73 points, or 0.6 percent, to 4,675.71.

Seven of the 10 sectors in the S&P 500 declined, with telecommunications stocks dropping the most. Energy stocks managed the biggest gain.

Avon Products led the index's decliners, sliding 47 cents, or 4.7 percent, to \$9.43.

Interest rates tend to increase when the economy is growing and adding

misinterpreted by financial markets.

Most economists predict that the Fed won't raise rates before June.

"The market's reaction is a reasonable one; no bombshells here," said Erik Davidson, deputy chief investment officer of Wells Fargo Private Bank. "The free short-term money that's out there will continue to be positive for the stock market." Apart from the Fed action, investors had their eye on quarterly earnings from several retailers.

Lowe's reported better-than-expected third-quarter earnings, helped by a nascent recovery in the housing market. The home improvement retailer also



In this photo, a man walks to work on Wall Street, in New York. U.S. stock exchanges will have to keep a closer eye on their electronic trading systems under rules adopted by federal regulators.

(AP Photo/Mark Lennihan)

US exchanges will have to test trading systems

MARCY GORDON
AP Business Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — U.S. stock exchanges will have to keep a closer eye on their electronic trading systems under rules adopted by federal regulators.

The Securities and Exchange Commission voted 5-0 Wednesday to require routine testing of exchanges' trading systems. The exchanges also will be required to notify the SEC about problems, including any systems that are compromised by hacking. Any problems must be quickly corrected.

The SEC action follows a series of technical disruptions in recent years — notably the "flash crash" of May 2010 — that regulators say shook investors' confidence in the markets.

The rules take effect in mid-January. They will replace a 20-year-old voluntary program for U.S. exchanges, which include the New York Stock Exchange, Nasdaq and a host of competing electronic marketplaces.

They are intended to reduce the chances of technology problems occurring and to put exchanges in a strong position to deal with them if they occur. As markets have become faster and more technologically advanced, they also are prone to more technical failures.

"Failures must be minimized and, when they occur, they must be remediated as quickly as possible and

promptly reported" to the SEC, agency chair Mary Jo White said before the vote. "Investors should expect no less of the world's premier securities markets — indeed, investor confidence depends on it."

The most stunning disruption came in the May 6, 2010 "flash crash," which regulators later determined was triggered by a computerized selling program. In panicky trading, the Dow Jones industrial average plunged hundreds of points in minutes before it eventually closed 348 points lower.

Regulators say that episode and others in recent years — including the technical glitch on the Nasdaq Stock Market that delayed Facebook's debut as a public company in May 2012 — showed that investors can be put at risk when technology fails and confidence in the markets can be damaged.

The markets have become increasingly complex and high-frequency trading, which uses computer algorithms to buy and sell stocks in milliseconds, now accounts for a majority of stock trading volume. The high-frequency trading firms look to get a jump on competitors by using computers to rapidly analyze market data and exploit split-penny price differences.

Regulators have put the ultra-fast trading systems under close scrutiny. Earlier this year.□



Trader Jason Harper, center, works on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange. U.S. financial markets pulled back slightly from their most recent record highs Wednesday, ending lower for the first time this week.

(AP Photo/Richard Drew)

benchmark interest rate that affects many consumer and business loans.

In the end, the deeper look at the Fed's deliberation didn't sway trading meaningfully.

"This does not move the needle a whole bunch," said John Canally, Chief Economic Strategist for LPL Financial. "The minutes confirm that the Fed remains on track to hike rates about a year from now based on the economy tracking to their forecasts." The slide in oil prices continued, despite pivoting

jobs, trends that are good for corporate profits. When rates remain low, however, they tend to make stocks more attractive in comparison with bonds.

During its Oct. 28-29 policy meeting, the Fed reaffirmed that it expected to keep a key short-term interest rate low for a "considerable time."

The minutes released Wednesday showed that the Fed decided not to alter its wording on the timing of any interest rate increases. Fed officials worried that a change could be

raised its full-year forecast. The stock rose \$3.73, or 6.4 percent, to \$62.26.

Target also reported third-quarter earnings that exceeded Wall Street's expectations, rebounding from a massive data breach just before Christmas last year. Its shares gained \$4.99, or 7.4 percent, to \$72.50.

Investors also bid up shares in Staples, which reported higher fiscal third-quarter earnings late Wednesday. The office supply chain surged \$1.16, or 9.1 percent, to \$13.92. □

Target rebounds in third quarter on solid sales

ANNE D'INNOCENZIO

AP Retail Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Target reported a 3.2 percent rise in its third-quarter profit and beat Wall Street expectations as shoppers spent more on beauty products, toys and back-to-school items.

The results, which marked its first increase in a key revenue measure in a year, shows how the company is successfully moving beyond a massive data breach disclosed a week before last Christmas. That sent customers fleeing for months and hurt sales and profits. Shares rose almost 5 percent on the news in morning trading Wednesday. The data theft, which compromised millions of credit and debit cards just one week before Christmas, was a major factor in the ousting of CEO Gregg Steinhafel in May. Former PepsiCo executive Brian Cornell took over in August, and he has the task of maintaining Target's momentum and reclaiming the retailer's image as a purveyor of cheap chic fashions and home decor. Cornell must also salvage Target's botched entry into Canada in 2013, which has been a big drag on profits. Target is still playing catch-up, particularly with Amazon.com, and has rolled out a service that allows people to order online and pick up goods at a store. It is also cutting shipping time by using its network of stores to ship directly to the homes of online shoppers. Like other retailers catering to middle-income shoppers, Target is wrestling with a customer base that has not benefited from the country's economic recovery because wages have remained stagnant.

"Overall, we were pleased with the third-quarter performance," John Mulligan, Target's chief financial officer. But he added, "We recognize we still have a lot of work to do as we continue to heal the U.S. business."

Mulligan said that while low gas prices have left shoppers with more money

to spend, it's hard to make the correlation with the data. Customers are still dealing with a lot of cross-currents, Mulligan said, so he believes shoppers will

son since Target made changes to its pricing and product assortment. Still, the company is not satisfied with the performance and Mulligan told reporters

sumed the helm, Target had begun to reassess its operations, sprucing up its baby department and adding mannequins to its fashion areas. Cornell

ence call with investors, Cornell stressed that it's not de-emphasizing food but will focus on offerings that are unique to Target. That will mean more organic and natural foods.

"We are stepping back and really listening to the guest," Cornell told investors.

Still, that's a change from a few years ago when Target aggressively expanded into groceries during the recession to increase traffic in its stores. Over the past eight years, fashion and home furnishings sales have dropped from a combined 47 percent to 36 percent of total sales. At the same time, food, pet supplies as well as household essentials rose from 30 percent to 46 percent of total sales, according to UBS retail analyst Michael Lasser.

Target has unveiled an aggressive plan to win its share of holiday sales this year. The company plans to open stores at 6 p.m. on Thanksgiving Day, two hours earlier than last year. That's the same time that Wal-Mart plans to begin offering its door-buster deals.



In this photo, Julie Wilkins helps her grandson put a box of crayons in a shopping cart while shopping with her family at a Target store in Memphis, Tenn. Target reported quarterly financial results on Wednesday, Nov. 19, 2014.

(AP Photo/Brandon Dill)

remain focused on deals. Meanwhile, operations in Canada have improved ahead of the holiday sea-

that it will assess its Canadian business after the fourth quarter.

Even before Cornell as-

wants to double-down on a handful of areas like children's products, fashion and furniture. In a confer-

Lowe's rides improving housing market in 3Q

MOORESVILLE, N.C. (AP) —

Lowe's third-quarter earnings jumped 17 percent as home improvement retailers continue to rebound from a tough start to the year, reaping gains from a nascent recovery in the housing market.

The company also raised its full-year forecast a day after rival Home Depot reported a 14 percent jump in third-quarter earnings. Shares of Lowe's jumped 5 percent to an all-time high in early trading.

Earnings for home improvement retailers were hampered earlier this year by bad weather, rising mortgage rates and a tight housing supply that chilled sales.

Home builder confidence has since improved and housing construction is starting to ramp up. The Commerce Department reported Wednesday that



An unidentified customer leaves a Lowe's home improvement store in Charlotte, N.C., Tuesday, Nov. 18, 2014. Lowe's reported quarterly financial results on Wednesday, Nov. 19, 2014.

(AP Photo/Chuck Burton)

construction of single-family homes rose 4.2 percent in October, the third gain in the past four months.

The housing market remains fragile, however. Home prices are rising at more than double the annual increase in wages, and economists fear home affordability will grow into a

larger problem unless there is a significant rebound in wages.

That could become a hurdle for retailers like Lowe's and Home Depot but right now, both companies are showing solid signs of recovery from their slow start to the year.

"We believe both compa-

nies are benefiting from sustained momentum in home improvement spending despite a slowdown in the broader housing market," wrote Canaccord analyst Laura Campine. "We are rethinking estimates in light of the report."

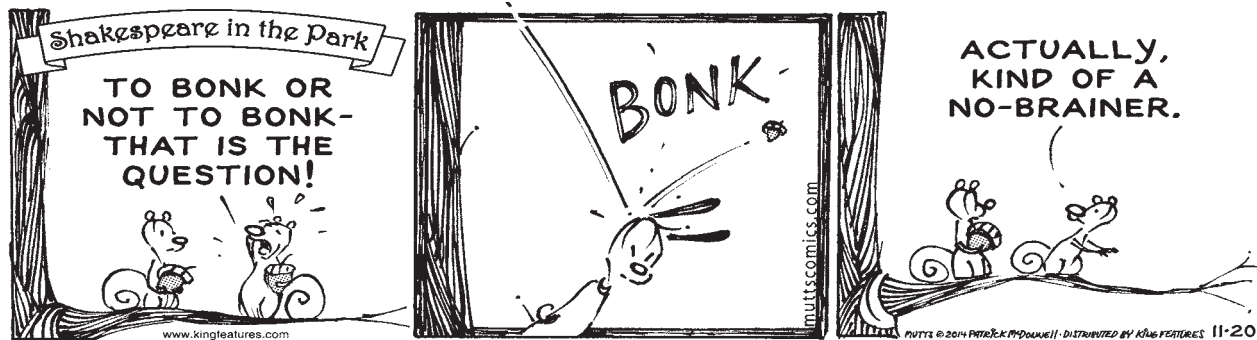
For the third quarter, Lowe's earned \$585 million, or 59 cents per share. That compares with earnings of \$499 million, or 47 cents per share, in the same period last year.

Analysts expected, on average, 58 cents per share, according to Zacks Investment Research.

Lowe's revenue climbed more than 5 percent to \$13.68 billion. That also surpassed Wall Street projections for \$13.55 billion in revenue.

Sales at stores open at least a year, a key indicator of a retailer's health, climbed 5.1 percent in the quarter.

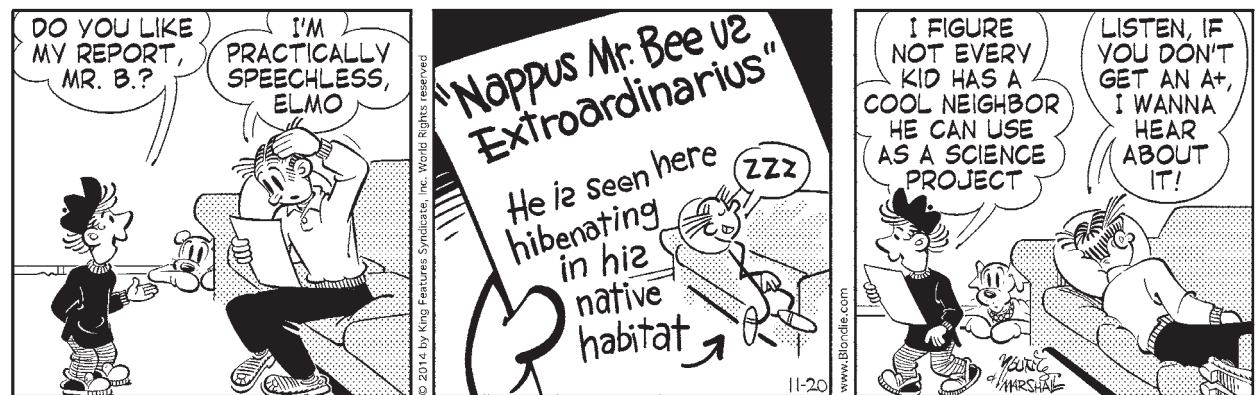
Mutts



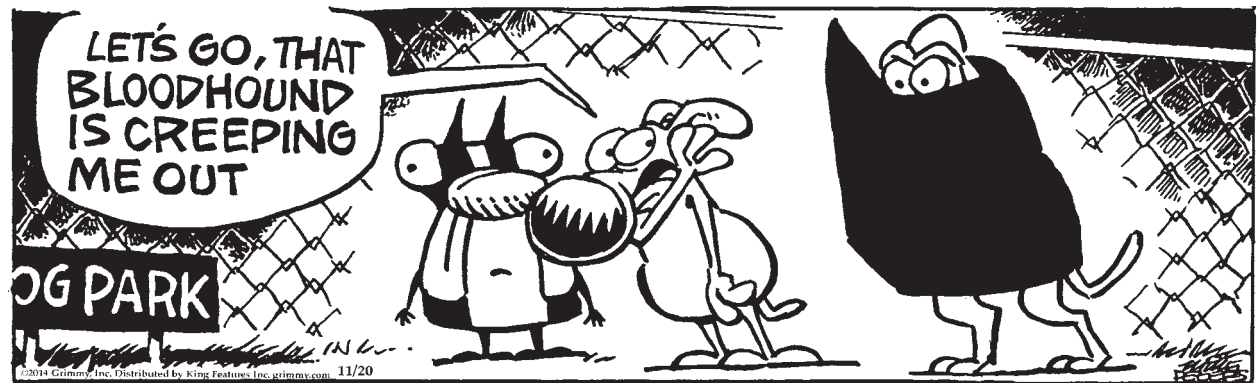
6 Chix



Blondie



Mother Goose & Grimm



Baby Blues



Zits



Conceptis Sudoku

	3						1	
2		5					7	4
			4		1			
		1		5		9		
			1	3	7			
		8		9		2		
			2		8			
4	7					8		9
	6						3	

Difficulty Level ★★★

11/20

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Sunday.

Yesterday's puzzle answer

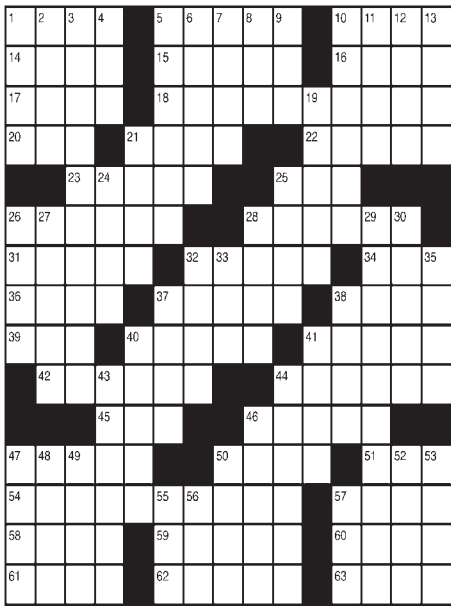
7	1	9	3	8	2	4	5	6
4	2	3	6	7	5	8	1	9
5	6	8	9	1	4	7	3	2
9	8	2	5	3	7	1	6	4
6	3	7	1	4	9	5	2	8
1	5	4	2	6	8	3	9	7
8	9	1	4	5	6	2	7	3
2	7	5	8	9	3	6	4	1
3	4	6	7	2	1	9	8	5

Difficulty Level ★★★

11/19

ACROSS

- 1 Treaty
5 Wild winds
10 Part of a tooth
14 Under the covers
15 Saying
16 Bump __; meet by chance
17 Misfortunes
18 Like a motormouth
20 Pinky or Bruce
21 Apple's center
22 Cat cries
23 Borg of tennis
25 Record speed letters
26 Founders' Day procession
28 Crab Louies and Waldorfs
31 No longer sleeping
32 Spicy; flavorful
34 Huge bird from Australia
36 Top of the head
37 Misrepresent
38 Close noisily
39 "You _ what you eat"
40 Bowling alley button
41 Cricket's sound
42 Van Halen and Cibrian
44 Misgivings
45 Leprechaun
46 Keep a cooking turkey moist
47 Syrup flavor
50 Judicial order
51 JFK's Attorney General
54 Horseman
57 Valley
58 Mom's sister
59 Review of the financial books
60 Perched on
61 Overdue
62 Impoverished
63 Swap __; flea market
- DOWN
- 1 Bucket



Created by Jacqueline E. Mathews

11/20/14

Wednesday's Puzzle Solved

S	H	E	L	F	A	C	E	S	M	A	M	A
C	O	V	E	R	L	U	A	U	A	G	E	S
O	R	A	T	E	B	L	U	R	T	E	R	N
W	A	S	H	E	D	U	P	F	R	I	N	G
A	D	A	M	R	E	E	N	T	E	R		
S	L	A	L	O	M	E	E	R	I	E		
A	I	L	M	O	O	D	S	N	E	C	K	S
L	A	S	H	N	I	G	E	R	S	O	A	K
T	R	O	O	P	L	A	T	E	R	A	L	I
L	O	W	E	R	B	E	A	T	E	N		
S	I	M	I	L	A	R	M	E	S	S		
P	R	A	N	K	S	C	O	L	E	S	L	A
L	A	N	E	H	U	L	A	N	A	I	V	E
I	T	I	S	E	T	O	N	T	I	M	I	D
T	E	A	S	R	E	D	S	S	L	E	D	S

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11/20/14

- 35 Baseball officials
37 Complaint
38 Close
40 Irritates
41 Price
43 Remove text
44 Tiny & delicate
46 Pigtail, usually
- 47 Lunch or dinner
48 Greenish-blue
49 Football kick
50 Broad
52 Ice mass
53 Saved
55 Light brown
56 __ McClanahan
57 Water barrier



James Swartz, director of World Against Toys Causing Harm Inc., holds up toy battle hammer at Children's Franciscan Hospital in Boston, Wednesday, Nov. 19, 2014. The consumer watchdog group has released its annual list of what it considers to be the 10 most unsafe toys as the holiday season approaches. (AP Photo/Charles Krupa)

Consumer group lists '10 worst toys' for kids

PHILIP MARCELO
Associated Press

BOSTON (AP) — A bow that shoots illuminated arrows its manufacturer says can fly up to 145 feet (44 meters) and the "Catapencil" — a pencil with a miniature slingshot-style launcher on its end — are on an annual list of unsafe toys released Wednesday by a Massachusetts consumer watchdog group.

World Against Toys Causing Harm, or W.A.T.C.H., issued the "10 Worst Toys" list to remind parents and consumers of the potential hazards in some toys as the holiday shopping season gets underway.

Organizers, who have been compiling the lists for more than three decades, said the toys singled out this year are representative of some of the typical problems they come across, and aren't the only potentially dangerous products on the market.

"It's not so much about the specific toys. It's about the hazards," James Swartz, the group's director, said at a news conference.

Many toys, he said, continue to have the same hazardous designs, including small, detachable parts that infants can choke on; strings that can cause strangulation; dangerous projectiles; and misleading or confusing warning labels and instructions.

Dr. Penny Norman, who developed ScienceWiz's

"Bottle Rocket Party," said she's surprised the company's kit, which includes rocket tubes, stoppers and yellow "caution tape" but not other necessary or recommended items, such as a bicycle pump or safety goggles, made the list.

She said the idea for the kits, which have been on the market since about 2005 and retail for around \$15, came after doing homemade bottle rocket experiments with children at summer camps and after-school programs in California.

The Toy Industry Association said American toy safety standards "remain the most protective in the world" and that the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, the federal

agency responsible for monitoring the safety of toys, "consistently" ranks toys among the safest of 15 consumer product categories commonly found in the home.

Joan Siff, W.A.T.C.H.'s president, noted that there have been at least 17 toy recalls representing over 4.8 million units of toys in the U.S. and Canada so far in 2014. She urged parents to be extra vigilant during the holiday season, when W.A.T.C.H. says more than 65 percent of toys are sold.

Here's W.A.T.C.H.'s full list of "worst toys" for 2014:

—"Air Storm Firetek Bow" by Zing

—"Ziggle" four-wheeled cycle by Radio Flyer



Classifieds

TIMESHARE FOR SALE

RENAISSANCE (one bedroom)

Week	room	price
23	343	\$4200
27	103	\$3750
30	515	\$4600
29	134	\$3750
42	103	\$6000
15	327	\$6500
37/38	548	\$5750
19	547	\$5000

LA CABANA

Week 47 room 237B \$1.500

PARADISE BEACH VILLAS

Week 29 room 129, 2 bedroom \$5.500

Contact Brian Cell: 593-0200

vr.realty@mac.com

202887

TIMESHARE RESALES

Marriott Ocean Club

1 br gold ocean view \$7000

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Time-share in Aruba?

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25 years experience

211004

TIMESHARE RESALES

Aruba Divi Phoenix

1 br week 46 room #1205

22 weeks remain on contract \$6500

1 br week 47 room # 1206

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24/7

UN: World not close to avoiding dangerous warming

SETH BORENSTEIN
AP Science Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — The world still isn't close to preventing what leaders call a dangerous level of man-made warming, a new United Nations report says. That's despite some nations' recent pledges to cut back on carbon dioxide emissions.

The report looks at the gap between what countries promise to do about carbon pollution and what scientists say needs to be done to prevent temperatures rising another two degrees. The two-degree level is a goal that world leaders set in 2009.

"The time window (for reaching that goal) is closing, closing," said United Nations undersecretary for environment Achim Steiner. And the cost of getting to that goal "is increasing, increasing."



Thick white smoke billows from a coal-fired power plant in Beijing, China Thursday, Nov. 13, 2014. Associated Press

To meet that goal, the world has to hit a peak of carbon dioxide, methane and other greenhouse gases before 2030, said the report's chief scientific editor, Joseph Alcamo. But the study says carbon emis-

sions will continue to soar until 2050 and by then it will be too late.

Using basic math and science, researchers figured out how much greenhouse gas the world can emit by 2030 and keep below that

two degree mark: about 46 billion tons (42 billion metric tons). Without factoring in this month's promises by the U.S. and China to reduce emissions, the world will be spewing between 15 and 19 billion tons more

than that, said Alcamo, chief scientist for the United Nations' environmental arm.

If the U.S. and China follow through with their promises, they may shave a few billions of tons off the total, said former U.S. Sen. Tim Wirth, vice chairman of the United Nations Foundation. Those pledges and an earlier one by Europe, while narrowing the gap, aren't large enough to close it, Alcamo said.

In his forward to the report, Steiner wrote that the "analysis reveals a worrisome worsening trend. Continued emissions of greenhouse gases will lead to an even warmer climate and exacerbate the devastating effect of climate change."

Outside scientists praised the numbers in the study, but Granger Morgan at Carnegie Mellon University raised a question that scientists have been debating more frequently: Is it time to abandon the two-degree goal as unrealistic? "Today a two-degree target is akin to a 60-year-old man who resolves to be 25 years old next year," Morgan said in an email. "It ain't gonna happen, but it's time to get really serious about achieving what we can." Steiner said because of the dangers of a warmer world, it is unthinkable to abandon the two-degree goal.

After the report was released at a Washington news conference, Tommy Remengesau — president of the small island nation of Palau, which is threatened by sea level rise — told The Associated Press that this really isn't about numbers: "For some of us, it's a matter of survival: life and death." □

CERN scientists discover 2 new subatomic particles

JOHN HEILPRIN
Associated Press

GENEVA (AP) — Scientists at the world's largest smasher said Wednesday they have discovered two new subatomic particles never seen before that could widen our understanding of the universe. An experiment using the European Organization for Nuclear Research's Large Hadron Collider found the new particles, which were predicted to exist, and are both baryons made from three quarks bound together by a strong force. In a statement Wednesday, officials at the lab known by its French acronym CERN announced the discovery, which could shed more light on how

things work beyond the "Standard Model" physics theory explaining the basic building blocks of matter. The results also were submitted to the publication Physical Review Letters. "Nature was kind and gave us two particles for the price of one," said one of the CERN collaborators, Matthew Charles, of the CNRS's LPNHE laboratory at Paris VI University. The new particles are more than six times as massive as the protons that scientists have been deliberately crashing into each other in a 17-mile (27-kilometer) tunnel on the Swiss-French border near Geneva to see what they can discover about the makeup of the universe and its tiniest particles. □

Study: Banking industry culture fosters cheating

SETH BORENSTEIN
AP Science Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — The banking industry seems to bring out dishonesty in people, a new study suggests. A team of Swiss economists tested the honesty of bank employees in a lab game that would pay off in cash if they cheated. When workers at an unnamed bank were asked about their home life, they were about as honest as the general public. But employees who had just been asked about work at the bank cheated 16 percent more. "Bank employees are not more dishonest than others," said Ernst Fehr of the University of Zurich, author of the study published

Wednesday by the journal Nature. But he said when reminded of their job they become more dishonest, so something about the culture of banking "seems to make them more dishonest."

The American Bankers Association dismissed the study: "While this study looks at one bank, America's 6,000 banks set a very high bar when it comes to the honesty and integrity of their employees. Banks take the fiduciary responsibility they have for their customers very seriously." Researchers studied 128 employees at a single bank (even the country where it is located was not revealed). □

Steve Carell vows not to 'play it safe anymore'

JAKE COYLE
AP Film Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Long before Steve Carell was showered in acclaim for his startling transformation into John du Pont for the true-crime drama "Foxcatcher," he was walking home from set, commiserating with co-star Mark Ruffalo. "We both looked at each other really in agreement that the whole thing was crazy and what we were doing was so far out there," Carell recalled in a recent interview. "We both felt we were taking huge swings." You, too, might be a tad nervous about how you'd come off if you were — like Carell — fitted with a prosthetic nose, covered in three-hours of make-up, and asked to portray, with somber severity, an increasingly psychotic, chemical empire heir with both a raging mother complex and a proclivity for sweat pants. Bennett Miller's "Foxcatcher," in which du Pont tragically befriends Olympic wrestler brothers Mark (Channing Tatum) and Dave (Ruffalo) Schultz, certainly had the potential of failing to pin down its stranger-than-fiction tale and leave Carell flopping on the mat. "We weren't going to go halfway with it. That would have ended up being nothing," Carell says. "We both felt very vulnerable, that it could potentially be the worst thing we'd ever done or the best, but there was little in between." The needle has clearly swung to "best." Carell's performance has been hailed as one of the most extraordinary of the year, one immediately inducted into the rich history of comedic actors veering into dramatic territory. Carell, who was named the most outstanding performer of the year by the Santa Barbara International Film Festival, is considered a shoo-in for a best actor nomination. "It's definitely darker than most anything I've ever done," Carell said. "The fact that Bennett had faith

in me to do it, that was really a reward in itself, getting that kind of affirmation from someone like that." Miller, the director of "Capote" and "Moneyball," was attracted to the idea of casting du Pont — who was convicted of murdering Dave Schultz on his family's 800-acre Foxcatcher estate in Pennsylvania in 1996 — with not an overtly villainous actor. Instead, he was drawn to Carell for his unthreatening demeanor and reputation. "I did believe in my heart that if it could work with Steve, that that would be the best for the film," says Miller. "I couldn't imagine something working better than if that could work. I did have glimpses of it in just talking to Steve about the character and hearing his commitment to do it." Since Carell's big-screen breakthrough in "The 40-Year-Old Virgin," the 52-year-old Second City alum has regularly mixed comedy and drama in films like "Little Miss Sunshine," "Dan in Real Life" and "The Way, Way Back." But the considerable step Carell takes into darker terrain in "Foxcatcher" wasn't premeditated, the former "Office" star says. "I didn't want to work at convincing people that I could do this," says Carell. "I just wanted to play the guy and try to do the best representation of this human being that I could. I didn't want that added sense, 'Oh, I hope people buy me in it' because people haven't necessarily seen me do this type of thing before. So I had to get past that and just do it." Doughy, balding and speaking with a halting, presumptuous air, Carell is nearly unrecognizable as the removed-from-reality du Pont, who in the film is a symbol of the unchecked power of wealth and patriotism run amok. Carell's old "Daily Show" boss, Jon Stewart (whose own drama, the film "Rosewater," reunited the two on the release calendar), says his former correspon-



Steve Carell arrives at the Hollywood Film Awards at the Palladium on Friday, Nov. 14, 2014, in Los Angeles. Associated Press

dent's gift for fleshing out a character was the same in a sketch: "He would find moments in it that you didn't know were there." In shaping du Pont, Miller and Carell discussed Jerry Lewis' creepy stalker from "The King of Comedy," a renown dramatic pivot for the comedian. Carell cites

Peter Sellers and his "Little Miss Sunshine" co-star Alan Arkin as actors he idolizes for their ability to range from broad comedy to serious drama. Much of "Foxcatcher," for which Carell somewhat remained in character during shooting outside Pittsburgh, remains a kind of

out-of-body experience for Carell. "It's strange to talk about because it was one of those experiences that seems so isolated from the rest of my life. I feel like that was three or four months and then it was gone," he says. But the film has clearly emboldened Carell. □

People mag names Chris Hemsworth 'Sexiest Man Alive'



In this July 26, 2014 file photo, Chris Hemsworth attends the Marvel press line at Comic-Con International in San Diego. Associated Press

MARK KENNEDY
AP Entertainment Writer
NEW YORK (AP) — People magazine has named Chris Hemsworth the "Sexiest Man Alive" of 2014, cheering the Australian actor's rise as hammer-wielding, bone fide hunk in the "Thor" films. Hemsworth, who also starred as Formula One

racer James Hunt in the Ron Howard-directed "Rush" and the "Star Trek" reboots, was unveiled as the winner on Tuesday's "Jimmy Kimmel Live!" When asked who he wanted to thank, Hemsworth told Kimmel his parents, "for putting this together." He joins a list of hunks with the honor, including Brad-

ley Cooper, Ryan Reynolds, Brad Pitt, George Clooney, Patrick Swayze, Sean Connery, Ben Affleck, Channing Tatum and Adam Levine. Mel Gibson, another Australian, was the first in 1985. The 31-year-old star of "Thor: The Dark World" and his 38-year-old wife, Elsa Pataky of "Fast and Furious 6," have three children. The actor's younger brother, Liam, stars in the "The Hunger Games: Catching Fire." Chris Hemsworth told People that the award "bought me a couple of weeks of bragging rights" around the house and with his wife. "I can just say to her, 'Now remember, this is what the people think, so I don't need to do the dishes anymore, I don't need to change nappies. I'm above that. I've made it now.'" □



In this Jan. 19, 2013 file photo, Panama's salsa singer Ruben Blades performs during the 10th edition of the Panama Jazz Festival in Panama City. Associated Press

Ruben Blades tangos his way to Latin Grammys

CHARLES J. GANS
Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Ruben Blades says he never imagined his CD "Tangos" would be nominated for a Latin Grammy. Instead, it's up for two — album of the year and best tango album. "People probably have to rub their eyes and say, 'What, Ruben Blades in the tango category?' I was surprised because you never know about Grammy nominations. My album 'Siembra,' arguably the biggest seller in the history of salsa, never got nominated for a Grammy," said the 66-year-old Blades, who has won four Latin Grammys and six Grammys. The Panamanian-born Blades says the nominations are affirmation of his belief that re-creating his salsa songs as tangos would work, even though he had to use completely different phrasing in singing such songs as "Paula C," "Ligia Elena," and "Adan Garcia."

At Thursday night's Latin Grammys, Blades will be performing the "Tangos" version of his biggest hit, "Pedro Navaja," inspired by "Mack the Knife," his

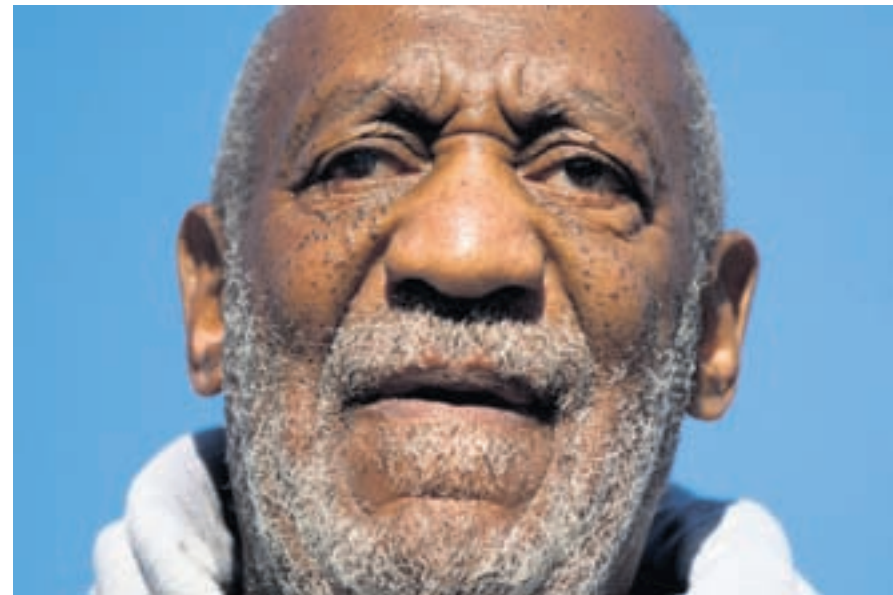
socially conscious song about the life and death of a murderous street hustler. On the new album, he performs "Pedro Navaja" with veteran Argentine bandoneonist Leopoldo Federico's orchestra as a milonga, a slightly faster tango style, a far cry from the original version on his 1978 "Siembra" album with Willie Colon, with blaring police sirens and horns and a throbbing salsa beat. "I felt that the instrumentation and the atmosphere that tango creates would make the lyrics more relevant and stronger," Blades said in a recent interview. "Salsa is action music, whereas in the tango you have space for reflection. There is something about tango that is very emotional. The instruments — the violin, the bandoneon — evoke nostalgia, sadness, opportunities lost and/or found. I always felt that some of my lyrics were shortchanged by the salsa format" with its strong rhythms that got in the way. Blades and his collaborator, arranger Carlos Franzetti, began discussing the tangos project more than a decade ago, but Blades put his entertain-

ment career on hiatus to serve as Panama's Minister of Tourism from 2004-2009. Franzetti says the biggest challenge was to dissect Blades' original songs and "mix the elements into a new brew." "Tango is a completely different genre than salsa: no constant rhythmic pulse, no percussion, different melodies, harmonies and instrumentation," Franzetti said in an email. "I had to apply all these tango elements to Ruben's songs, maintaining their integrity while making them into believable tangos and milongas." "Tangos" reflects a genre-blending approach to music that Blades has dubbed "mixture." Blades will soon be going into the studio to do a "rock en espanol" album, also including some English-language songs he wrote with Lou Reed, with his new Paraiso Road Gang band that he formed with his wife, singer Luba Mason, which he says will play an unpredictable mix from tango and salsa to jazz and bluegrass. "Mixture" might also describe Blades' diverse career paths that also include acting and politics. □

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"Mixture" might also describe Blades' diverse career paths that also include acting and politics. □



Entertainer and Navy veteran Bill Cosby speaks during a Veterans Day ceremony, Tuesday, Nov. 11, 2014, at the The All Wars Memorial to Colored Soldiers and Sailors in Philadelphia. Associated Press

NBC scraps Cosby television project

DAVID BAUDER
AP Television Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — NBC says it has scrapped a Bill Cosby comedy that was under development, the second outlet within a day to put off or abandon a Cosby project after another sexual assault allegation against the comic emerged. NBC spokeswoman Rebecca Marks said Wednesday the project "is no longer under development," and had no further comment. Netflix announced late Tuesday that it was postponing the Nov. 27 premiere of a new Cosby standup comedy special, giving no hint about whether it ever will be aired. Hours earlier in an interview with "Entertainment Tonight," actress Janice Dickinson became the third woman in recent weeks to allege she'd been assaulted by Cosby — charges strongly denied by the comedian's lawyer. Dickinson told "Entertainment Tonight" that Cosby had given her red wine and a pill when they were together in a Lake Tahoe, California, hotel room in 1982. When she woke

up the next morning, "I wasn't wearing my pajamas and I remembered before I passed out I had been sexually assaulted by this man." Cosby's lawyer, Martin Singer, said in a letter to The Associated Press that Dickinson's charges were "false and outlandish" and were contradicted by Dickinson herself in a published autobiography. Cosby's spokesman, David Brokaw, has not returned calls for comment.

The spiraling scandal has threatened the 77-year-old comedian's reputation as America's TV dad at a time when he was launching a comeback. He has at least 35 performances scheduled throughout the U.S. and Canada through May of 2015. None of the performances has been cancelled.

NBC's project, announced in January, was in the very early stages, without a script or commitment to production. But it would have brought Cosby back to the network where he had reigned in the 1980s with the top-rated "The Cosby Show." □

Who Are We?



THOMAS L. FRIEDMAN
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DUBAI, United Arab Emirates - The 9/11 suicide attack, spearheaded by 19, mostly Saudi, young men in the name of Islam, ignited a debate in the Sunni Arab world about religion and how their societies could have produced such suicidal fanatics. But it was quickly choked off by denial, and by America's failed invasion of Iraq. Well, conversations here in Dubai, one of the great Arab/Muslim crossroads, make it clear that the rise of the Islamic State "caliphate" in Iraq and Syria, and its barbaric treatment of those who are against them - moderate Sunnis or Shites, Christians, other minorities and women - has revived this central debate about "who are we?"

Why? Because the Islamic State, or ISIS, is homegrown; its aim is not to strike at enemies far away, but to spread and impose its vision of an Islamic society right here and right now; it's attracting Muslim youths from all over, including the West; its ideology is a violent mutation of the puritanical, non-pluralistic, Wahhabi Islam, the dominant trend in Saudi Arabia, and it is being beamed via Twitter and Facebook - parents here know - directly to their kids. That's why it's forcing an inescapable and painful look in the mirror.

"We can't avoid this fight any longer - we're on a train heading for a cliff," said Abdullah Hamidaddin, an adviser to the Dubai-based Al-Mesbar Studies & Research Center, which tracks Islamist movements and works to promote a more pluralistic culture. What is most striking, though, is how much Al-Mesbar sees ISIS not as just a religious problem that has to be combated with a more inclusive Islamic narrative but as the product of all the problems ailing this region at once: underdevelopment, sectarianism, lagging education, sexual repression, lack of respect for women and lack of pluralism in all intellectual thought.

Rasha al-Aqeedi is an Iraqi editor from Mosul working at Al-Mesbar. She has stayed in touch with people in Mosul since ISIS took over.

"What is happening," she told me, is that the Sunni Muslim population of Mosul "has now awakened from the shock. Before, people would say, 'Islam is perfect and [the outside world] is after us and hates us.' Now people are starting to read the books that ISIS is based on. I hear from people in Mosul who say, 'I am considering becoming an atheist.'"

She added: When a young man

who has not passed the sixth grade joins ISIS and then "comes and tells a teacher at the university what he must teach and that he must wear a long gown, you can imagine the shock. I hear people saying: 'I am not going to the mosque and pray as long as they are here. They don't represent Islam. They represent the old Islam that never changed.'" Besides the religious zealots in ISIS, you also find many adventurers and impoverished youths attracted to ISIS simply to be able to lord it over others. Many of the Sunnis who rushed to join ISIS in Mosul came from the much poorer town nearby, Tel Afar, whose citizens were always looked down upon by Mosul Sunnis.

"You see these boys [from Tel Afar]. They smoke. They drink. They have tattoos," said Aqeedi. One of them who joined ISIS came up to someone I know who already covers her head with a hijab - but not her face - and he told her to put on a burqa and cover everything. He told her, 'If you don't wear a burqa, I will make sure one of the rural women, who people like you ridiculed your whole life, will come and give you a beating.'" This was about who has power - radical Islam was just the cover.

"People are attracted to moderate religion because they are moderates to begin with," argues Hamidaddin. "People are attracted to extreme black-and-white religious ideologies" because the warped social and economic context they live in produces an attraction to holistic black-and-white solutions." (It is one reason Pakistani Muslims tend to be more radical than Indian Muslims.)

Yes, religious reform would help, added Hamidaddin. But "it was the complete deterioration of the economic, security and political situation [in Iraq and Syria] that demanded a clear black-and-white interpretation of the world. It takes the right [government] policies to counteract that."

Maqsood Kruse runs the He-dayah International Center to counter violent extremism, which is hosted by the United Arab Emirates. He's concluded that beating back "ISIS-ism" will require a long-term investment to empower and educate Arab citizens to compete and thrive in modernity. Only people here can do that because it's a challenge of governing, educating and parenting.

"That suicide bomber can decide not to push the button, and our job is to understand how we can help him decide not to push the button, to make him or her aware, conscious and rational, rather than be swept along," said Kruse.

"It is all about how we equip and support our youth and prevent them from being someone who says, 'I have the truth.'" We need them to have "the ability to deconstruct ideas and be immune and self-resilient" to extremism. It is all about, "how we get them to pause and think" - before they act. □



The Great Betrayal



ROSS DOUTHAT
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In the months since President Barack Obama first seem poised - as he now seems poised again - to issue a sweeping executive amnesty for millions of illegal immigrants, we've learned two important things about how this administration approaches its constitutional obligations.

First, we now have a clear sense of the legal arguments that will be used to justify the kind of move Obama himself previously described as a betrayal of our political order. They are, as expected, lawyerly in the worst sense, persuasive only if abstracted from any sense of precedent or proportion or political normality.

Second, we now have a clearer sense of just how anti-democratically this president may be willing to proceed.

The legal issues first. The White House's case is straightforward: It has "prosecutorial discretion" in which illegal immigrants it deports, it has precedent-grounded power to protect particular groups from deportation, and it has statutory authority to grant work permits to those protected. Therefore, there can be no legal bar to applying discretion, granting protections and issuing work permits to roughly half the illegal-immigrant population.

This argument's logic, at once consistent and deliberately obtuse, raises one obvious question: Why stop at half? (Activists are already asking.) After all, under this theory of what counts as faithfully executing the law, all

that matters is that somebody, somewhere, is being deported; anyone and everyone else can be allowed to work and stay.

So the president could "temporarily" legalize 99.9 percent of illegal immigrants and direct the Border Patrol to hand out work visas to every subsequent border crosser, so long as a few thousand aliens were deported for felonies every year.

The reality is there is no agreed-upon limit to the scope of prosecutorial discretion in immigration law because no president has attempted anything remotely like what Obama is contemplating. In past cases, presidents used the powers he's invoking to grant work permits to modest, clearly defined populations facing some obvious impediment (war, persecution, natural disaster) to returning home. None of those moves even approached this plan's scale, none attempted to transform a major public policy debate, and none were deployed as blackmail against a Congress unwilling to work the president's will.

And none of them had major applications outside immigration law. No defender of Obama's proposed move has successfully explained why it wouldn't be a model for a future president interested in unilateral rewrites of other areas of public policy (the tax code, for instance) where sweeping applications of "discretion" could achieve partisan victories by fiat.

No liberal has persuasively explained how, after spending the last Republican administration complaining about presidential "signing statements," it makes sense for the left to begin applying Cheneyite theories of executive power on domestic policy debates.

Especially debates in which the executive branch is effectively acting in direct defiance of the electoral process. This is where the administration has entered extraordinarily brazen territory, since part of its original case for taking these steps was that they supposedly serve the public will, which only yahoos and congressional Republicans oppose.

This argument was specious before; now it looks ridiculous. The election just past was not, of course, a formal referendum on the president's proposed amnesty, but it was conducted with the promise of unilateral action in the background, and with immigration as one of the more hotly debated issues.

The result was a devastating defeat for Obama and his party, and most polling on unilateral action is pretty terrible for the president.

So there is no public will at work here. There is only the will to power of this White House.

Which is why the thinking liberal's move, if this action goes forward, will be to invoke structural forces, flaws inherent in our constitutional order, to justify Obama's unilateralism.

This won't be a completely fallacious argument: Presidential systems like ours have a long record, especially in Latin America, of producing standoffs between executive and legislative branches, which tends to make executive power grabs more likely.

In the United States this tendency has been less dangerous - our imperial presidency has grown on us gradually; the worst overreaches have often been rolled back.

But we do seem to be in an era whose various forces - our open-ended post-9/11 wars, the ideological uniformity of the parties - are making a kind of creeping caudillismo more likely.

But if that evil must come, woe to the president who chooses it. And make no mistake, the president is free to choose. No immediate crisis forces his hand; no doom awaits the country if he waits.

He once campaigned on constitutionalism and executive restraint; he once abjured exactly this power.

There is still time for him to respect the limits of his office, the lines of authority established by the Constitution, the outcome of the last election.

Or he can choose the power grab, and the accompanying disgrace. □

As More Schools Pry; College Applicants Sanitizing Their Social Media Profiles

NATASHA SINGER
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Admissions officers at Morehouse College in Atlanta were shocked several years ago when a number of high school seniors submitted applications using email addresses containing provocative language.

Some of the addresses made sexual innuendos while others invoked gangster rap songs or drug use, said Darryl D. Isom, Morehouse's director of admissions and recruitment.

But last year, he and his staff noticed a striking reversal: Nearly every applicant to Morehouse, an all-male historically black college, used his real name, or some variation, as his email address.

Morehouse admissions officials, who occasionally dip into applicants' public social media profiles looking for additional details about them, also found fewer provocative posts.

"Students know college admissions departments are looking," Isom said. "They are cleaning up their online profiles before they ever apply."

Morehouse's experience mirrors the findings in a new report from Kaplan Test Prep. This application season fewer college officials are finding online material that could derail a student's chance of admission, even though an increasing number of college admissions officers consider the public social media accounts of applicants as fair game.

Of the 403 undergraduate admissions officers who were polled by telephone over the summer, 35 percent said they had visited an applicant's social media page - a 9 percentage point increase compared with 2012. But only 16 percent of them said they had discovered information online that had hurt a student's application - compared with 35 percent in 2012. "Students are more aware that any impression they leave on social media is leaving a digital fingerprint," said Seppy Basili, Kaplan's vice president for college admissions. "My hunch

is that students are not publicly chronicling their lives through social media in the same way."

He pointed to several trends responsible for this change. For one, many parents and guidance counselors now warn teenagers that posting controversial material, or even an offhand comment, online could have long-term repercussions for

School in Charlotte, North Carolina.

The practice of undergraduate admissions officers' conducting online searches on applicants or seeking out their social media profiles occurs most often at private, highly selective liberal arts colleges that handpick their incoming classes with the idea of creating unique, diverse com-

because it can be difficult to authenticate that an account belongs to the student in question.

"This is a land mine for admissions officers," said Bradley S. Shear, a lawyer who specializes in social media and privacy. He added that treating one group of students differently than another group could be potentially discriminatory.

for information about candidates.

"Some colleges look; some do not," he said. "As consumers, students should have access to that information."

But some admissions directors who have a general policy not to seek out online material about applicants have occasionally made exceptions under special circumstances.

At Reed College in Portland, Oregon, in the mid-2000s, for instance, admissions officers were alerted to an online chat room where an applicant who had figured out a loophole in the financial aid system was encouraging others to take advantage of it.

"It did factor into the admissions decision," said Paul Marthers, who was the dean of admissions at Reed at the time and is now the vice provost for enrollment management and student success at the State University of New York system. "We considered it to be a financial aid fraud situation."

Although admissions officers within the SUNY system do not research applicants online, Marthers said school officials considering posting an admissions transparency statement on the practice that they would reserve the right to investigate if a problem came to their attention. At Washington College in Chestertown, Maryland, admissions officials do not proactively seek out candidates on social media. But while monitoring the college's brand online, admissions officers often happen upon applicants who have publicly commented on the college, and they immediately forward those posts to Satyajit Dattagupta, the vice president for enrollment management.

In a phone interview last week, Dattagupta said he looked favorably upon applicants who posted positive comments about the college and about themselves. But he said he was troubled by applicants who publicly disparaged his college or any other on social media using offensive language. □



Satyajit Dattagupta, the vice president for enrollment management at Washington College in Chestertown, Md., Nov. 17, 2014. College admissions officials have noted more and more applicants keeping a scrupulously clean profile social media, aware that they are being tracked.
(J.M. Eddins Jr./The New York Times)

their college or career prospects.

As a result, in their junior year or earlier, many high school students have started sanitizing their online profiles - making them private, deleting certain posts, removing name tags in photos, using pseudonyms.

Also, today's teenagers, who are not just digital natives, but native social networkers, use a wider variety of sites and apps than their predecessors. And they are embracing more visual mediums, like YouTube and Instagram, as well as ephemeral messaging apps like Snapchat, and anonymous chat sites like YikYak, where parents and college officials may be less likely to find them.

"Students are quickly moving from one medium to another trying to get away from the grasp of adults," said Jody Jennings, the co-director of college counseling at Charlotte Latin

munities.

Large state universities, whose admissions criteria involve quantifiable measures like grades and test scores, do not have the capacity for individual explorations of applicants' social lives.

Some smaller colleges forbid their admissions officers from vetting applicants' online activities because they view the practice as an invasive and subjective exercise that could result in unfair decisions for students. "I don't think we should be trolling for information that was not submitted by the students for our use in rendering the decision," said Debra J. Chermonte, the dean of admissions at Oberlin College in Oberlin, Ohio. At Oberlin, she said, admissions officers may review only the material submitted by students as part of their application.

Some colleges also avoid vetting applicants online

"That's why admissions officers have to be very careful if they decide to look up an applicant online or review their social media profiles." Yet students and their parents have no way of knowing whether admissions officers at certain colleges look at applicants' online footprints - or when a college rejects a student based on something found online - because colleges and universities generally don't post information about their social media vetting practices on admissions sites.

"When they take a college tour, students could ask, 'Do you guys look?'?" said Jim Bock, the dean of admissions at Swarthmore College in Swarthmore, Pennsylvania. "It's a fair question."

While applicants may submit online material, like links to an app or video they created, Bock prohibits admissions officers from going online on their own to look